A

GENERAL VIEW

OF THE

PRINCIPLES and SPIRIT

OF THE

PREDESTINARIANS.

With an APPENDIX concerning an *extraordinary and most perceptible Illumination* of the Mind by God's Spirit, in *Regeneration* and *Saving* Faith.

The leading Doctrines of the *Moravians, Methodists* and Followers of the Rev. Mr. *Whitfield.*

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1 Thes. 5, 21. *Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.* Acts 17, 11. *These were more noble than those in* Thessalonica, *in that they received the Word with all Readiness of Mind, and searched the Scriptures daily,* WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.

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A GENERAL VIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES and SPIRIT OF THE PREDESTINARIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

1. THE Natural Consequences of that *Toleration*, which by the Blessing of Almighty God, and the benign Influence of our happy Establishment, the various Denominations of *Christians* are taught to exercise towards each other, appear in a more charitable and friendly Disposition kept up among them, a less positive Manner of inculcating their peculiar Notions; and a more candid Inquiry into disputed Points, without the same unreasonable *Biass* to great Names, or the *Terror* of incurring the violent Censures, or ill Treatment of their Fellow *Christians*.

2. To preſerve theſe great Advantages among *Proteſtants*, the following Draft of the Principles of the *Predeſtinarians*, and the Spirit which they *once* diſcovered, is exhibited ; not to imbitter the Minds of *Chriſtians*, one againſt another, but ſerve as a *caution* to prevent the like unhappy Encroachments and pernicious Effects, whenever they ſeem likely to ariſe.

3. Charity does not neceſſarily require the Suppreſſion of our Religious Notions, but rather prompts to the communicating them, that our Neighbour may be furniſhed with the Opportunity of rectifying them ; or, ſeeing the Difficulties which prevent our conforming to him, may more readily conſent to leave us to worſhip the great God peaceably, according to the Dictates of our Conſciences, in the beſt Manner we are capable of ; in which *Freedom* the true Notion of Religious Worſhip alone conſiſts, and without which we can ſcarcely be ſaid to worſhip our Maker at all.

4. A Repreſentation of the Notions of the *Predeſtinarians* may ſeem ſtrange to *Chriſtians*, who are now generally of another Mind ; but they will more readily allow it to be made, when any *particular Occaſion* may require it : Beſides ſuch as deſire a general Knowledge of the Controverſy, may quickly run through the following Abſtract, who have neither Leiſure nor Inclination to peruſe large * Treatiſes : I ſhall therefore without further Apology proceed to the Buſineſs intended.

Of

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* *Thoſe who would read more on the Controverſy may conſult Dr.* Whitby, *on the Five Points, Biſhop* Burnet *on the 17th of the thirty nine Articles,* Limborch, Turretin, *&c.*

Of the PRINCIPLES *of the* PREDESTINARIANS.

5. THE leading Principle upon which all others depend, and from which they derive their * Name is that of God's *absolutely predestinating*, i. e. fore-ordaining or appointing *the eternal State of*

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* *The Names* Predestinarian, Fatalist, *&c. are sometimes taken generally to mean God's ordaining whatever comes to pass, both good and bad,* i. e. *all the good or evil Thoughts, Words and Actions both of Angels, Men and Devils; and of those some hold, that after God has manifested his Perfections in the infinite Scenes, which shall arise among his Creatures, all things shall at last turn out for the general Good and Happiness of the Creation, and these are called* Beltistans; *while others again maintain from the same Principle, that as God manifests his Glory and Grace in the Salvation of a few, whom he chooses to make eternally happy, without any Regard to their good Behaviour, so he manifests his Power and other Perfections in the eternal Damnation of the greatest Number of his Creatures, whom he condemns to Sin and Misery, without any Regard had to their Disobedience, and these laying no Stress on the Law of God, only on his Decree, as any way concerned in their Election, or Reprobation are called* Antinomians; *some of whom will venture to say, that as God decrees both the End and the Means, he decrees to set the Glass of Wine before the Drunkard, a beautiful Woman before a lustful Man, and Instruments of Cruelty before the Violent, to* tempt, *nay* compel *them, to act Wickedness; he decrees the Thief shall steal and shall murder, yet shall be apprehended and executed,* &c. *But the Name* Predestinarian

of Man, of his meer Pleasure, without any Respect to foreseen Faith or Obedience. —— Such as commence the Decree before the Fall are called *Supralapsarians*, and those who would have it take Place after the Fall are called *Sublapsarians*. The former say, God decreed the first form'd Man should by his Fall bring himself and all his Posterity into a State of temporal, spiritual and eternal Death, that he might for his own Glory take Occasion to elect a certain number of them to eternal Life, and condemn the rest. The latter hold, that *Adam* fell freely, and so bringing himself and all his Race into that dismal Condition, God of his free Grace *chose* a few to Everlasting Life, and *passing by* the rest, left them in that State of Damnation, into which their Father had brought them.—— The Difference therefore between them is very little, for what is it to the poor condemned Part of Mankind, whether the Date of their Reprobation commences before or after the Fall of *Adam, since their Fate is equally independent of their own Behaviour and equally deplorable?* They hold Secondly, that *Christ* died only for the *Elect*, or that particular Number whom God intended to save. Thirdly, that his Grace works in them with an invincible Force, for their Conversion and Salvation. And if we add, in Consequence of this third, the following two Points, we shall have the five famous Points, on Account of the Rejection of which, the *Remonstrants* in the *Low-Countries* were condemned by the

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destinarian *is, in this Tract, explained in a somewhat milder and more limited Sense, called* Calvinism; *however as the Reasoning affects the most extensive Notion of the Word, I choose to use the general Name* Predestinarian, *rather than the more particular one* Calvinist.

the famous Synod of *Dort*, *viz.* Fourthly, that Man has loſt all *Power* by the Fall, and ſhould therefore be conſidered as *abſolutely dead* to all that is good. Fifthly, that that Grace of God, which regenerates the Elect, *preſerves* them to Life eternal.

6. As I purpoſe in a ſummary Way to argue againſt the preceding Principles, and anſwer Objections; I ſhall begin with exhibiting general Reaſons againſt that leading Principle, on which they all depend, *viz.* "That God ſaved a few of "our Race, out of his meer Pleaſure, or becauſe "he would ſave them, and the Reaſon, why the "greateſt Part of Mankind is not ſaved, is becauſe "he was reſolved not to ſave them, *i. e.* becauſe "he would not *elect* them, *Chriſt Jeſus* would "not *die* for them, *invincible* Grace ſhould not "be afforded to them, and ſo that State of Spi-"ritual Death into which *Adam* had brought "them ſhould obſtruct their Converſion, and make "them eternally miſerable."

7. The Decrees of God are allowed to be profoundly ſecret, and ſo independent of Faith and Obedience in the Creature, that no *Wickedneſs* can obſtruct the Happineſs of the Elect, and no *Face of Piety* * can preſerve the Reprobate; therefore as a Man can't certainly know what his future State will be, by any outward Means or Appearances, and few pretend to a ſecret Revelation, in caſe a Suſpicion ſhould ariſe in his Mind of his being reprobated by God, what ſolid Comfort can he have either from Nature or Religion, ſince the Decrees of God are allowed to be independent of both? It ſeems therefore natural to conclude, that

* *Not their having the Holy Ghoſt, or taſting the Heavenly Gift, or the good Word of God, or even the Powers of the World to come*, &c. Heb. vi. 5, 6.

it is at least desirable, *that there should be no Decree of the Almighty to prove a Bar to the Happiness of any Creature.*

8. But how can the Attributes of Almighty God be maintained upon the Foot of such a Decree? The *Wisdom* of God in framing Creatures, which in their Nature are so degenerate, that they can't possibly subsist before him and be happy; and in discovering his Will respecting what they should do to obtain his Favour, when at the same time, by another secret Act, he has determined they shall never be able to perform it; yet [a] *inviting, expostulating* and *chiding* them, for not doing what he knows they have no Power to do; the *Goodness* and *Sincerity* of that Being who is [b] *Truth itself*, and whose *tender Mercies are over all his Works*, who has proclaimed himself *merciful and gracious, long-suffering*, and *abundant in Goodness*, and who has even sworn that *he hath no Pleasure in the Death of Sinners*, who calls upon them by his Word and Spirit to return, and by his Ministers *beseeches them to* do it; and lastly, in the Person of our Saviour, lamented over those of *Jerusalem*, that continued impenitent; yet after all, never *seriously* intended they should receive any Advantage from him; the *holiness* of God, who is said to be [c] of *purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*, yet bears to see it in multitudes of his Creatures, when he could as easily remove it from them, as he has actually done from others; and lastly, his *Justice* and *Equality*, in punishing some poor Creatures, for Faults, which all were equally guilty of, and which they could not possibly avoid, because

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[a] *Mat.* 11. 28. *Ezek.* 33. 11. *Isa.* 1. 11. *Jer.* 4. 4, 14. *&c.* [b] *Deut.* 32. 4. *John*, 14. 6. *Psal.* 145. 9. *Exod.* 34. 6. *Ezek.* 33. 11. *Luke* 19. 41, 42, *and* 13. 34. [c] *Heb.* 1. 13.

because their corrupted Nature and his uncontroulable Decree opposed. Might not the poor Sinners say, as the *Israelites*, [d] *Our Father has eaten sour Grapes, and the Children's Teeth are set on Edge*; and what Room could there be for the Offence, which God is said to have taken against that Expression?

9. A Consideration also of the Nature of Man affords further Arguments against an absolute Decree. We *feel*, that tho' we are sometimes, and on some Occasions, hurried on so impetuously, as to seem to have lost our Freedom, we might have restrained that Heat in its first Beginnings; we *feel* in our selves a Power of governing our Thoughts, Affections and Actions, and of raising and improving our Faculties, and without allowing this Power, *the Foundation of Virtue and Vice, Rewards and Punishments seems to be destroyed*, and Men might justify in themselves an *Indolence* in respect of *Virtue*, and a *want of Remorse* in respect of *Vice*; as being both impossible in any Degree beyond the Extent of the divine Decree.

10. And the Nature of the Gospel itself serves to evince the same. It is proposed as the Duty of [e] all to receive, and offers Life thro' Faith in *Jesus Christ*; but what is made a general Duty, must surely in its Nature be practicable. How then can the Conditions of *Faith* and *Obedience* be impracticable? Can the Power of God, or his Goodness be questioned in not affording that *Grace*, without which the Sinner cannot be saved? Can the Father of Mercies shut up his Bowels of Compassion against any of his poor Creatures, and refuse them Help, when he invites them to come for it?

[d] *Ezek.* 18. 2. *&c.* [e] *Matt.* 11. 28, *&* 28. 19. *John* 1. 7. *Tit.* 2. 11.

The Voice that calls might e'en as well be dumb,
As with the Call not give the Power to come.

11. Hither alſo we may refer the many [f] *Commands* and *Exhortations* directed to *Chriſtians* in the holy Scriptures, to ſtand faſt in the Faith, Watch, Pray, Build, Arm, Fight, Run, *&c.* with [g] *Cautions* againſt Careleſſneſs, High-mindedneſs, *&c.* [h] *Promiſes* of Grace and Strength to encourage and aſſiſt, with [i] *Expoſtulations* and ſevere [k] *Threatnings*, in Caſe of Apoſtacy, *&c.* for is it poſſible, that our Intereſt in God and Bliſs ſhould ſo evidently and frequently be repreſented as ſuſpended on certain *Conditions*, and yet no ſuch *Conditions* ever intended? What valuable Purpoſes could theſe Meaſures poſſibly ſerve?

12. 'Tis ſaid God decrees the *Means* as well as the *End*, *viz.* that Commands, Exhortations, Cautions, Promiſes, *&c.* ſhould be addreſſed to Men to beget in them Faith, Repentance, Obedience, *&c.* and that his Grace makes the neceſſary, cloſe and inſeparable Connexion between all theſe, in reſpect of the *Elect*, but ſuffers the *Links* of the Chain to remain unconnected in the *Reprobate*. Or for further Illuſtration, that God provides for the Well-

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[f] 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. *Luke* 21. 36. *Eph.* 6. 11, 13. *Jude* 20. *Rev.* 2. 25, *&c.* [g] *Heb.* 12. 15. 2 *Pet.* 3. 17. *Gal.* 6. 9. *Heb.* 3. 14. *Rom.* 11, 20, *&c.* *Philip* 1. 6, & 2. 16. *Heb.* 4. 1, 3. 1 *Pet.* 1. 17, 23. 2 *Cor.* 11. 1, *&c* & 4. 11. *Luke* 21. 34, 36. [h] *Mat.* 24. 12, 13. *Rev.* 2. 10. *Coloſ.* 1. 22, 23. *Heb.* 3. 6, & 14. [i] *Iſa.* 1. 18. *Jer.* 4. 14. *Ezek.* 18. 30, *&c.* [k] *Pſ.* 7. 11, *&c.* *Jer.* 15. 1, & 18. 11. *Luke* 13. 3, 5. *John* 8. 24. *Heb.* 10. 26. *John* 15. 6. *Rev.* 2. 5, 16 & *Ch.* 3. 2, 3.

Well-being of the *Elect*, just as in an animal Body, he provides for the Support and Happiness of the Animal, by constituting a natural, close and necessary Connexion between that End and the proper Means, which tend to obtain it, *viz.* the implanting in it a Desire to acquire suitable nourishing Food, and enabling it to prepare, grind and digest it, *&c.* by which Means it is converted into Chyle, Blood, *&c.* But as we can easily distinguish between these Movements in our Bodies, which *do not* depend on our Wills, and those which *do*, and as we are abundantly convinced we have *a free living Principle within us*, by which we Speak, Walk, and Act in a *natural* Way; so we may equally appeal to our Feelings in respect of our *Freedom* in a *moral* or *religious* Way; besides to assert, that the Reason why any Man misbeheaves, is for *want of Grace*, to keep up the Connexion between Religion and Eternal Life, and thereby produce in him the desired Effect of his Salvation, is in a Manner to ascribe his Imperfection and Wickedness to a perfect and holy God, and should therefore, one would think, be a plain and uncontested Proof against such a gross and absurd Position.

13. The Doctrine of Predestination bears an Affinity to that of the antient *Valentinians*, *Marcionites*, *Basilidians*, *Manichees*, *&c.* who held there were two governing Principles a good and a bad, and the Reason why Men were persevering-ly wicked, and at last condemned, was, because they were under the Influence of the *Evil-Principle*;——i. e. in Effect under the Decree of *Reprobation*.

14. And here we may take Occasion to observe, that all the Fathers before St. *Austin*, in Writing against them, unanimously used such Principles and Reasonings, as equally respect the Confutation of the *Predestinarian* Principles; as might be instanced

ed in Quotations taken from *Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Crysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Isiodore, Pelusiota, Theophylact, Origen, Jerom, Theodoret, Clemens. Alexandrinus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian,* &c.

15. And really Common Sense would suggest, that the asserting such a Decree of Election and Reprobation, not only gives a disadvantageous and even absurd Representation of the Divine and Human Nature; but seems *to render Religion itself useless,* as doing nothing more than what had been long before effected by the Divine Decree, and having no other Efficacy than what that Decree gives it.

16. It is objected by the *Predestinarians,* "that "God, being essentially perfect, and independent "of his Creatures, his Decrees should be indepen-"dent of them also; or they would otherwise be "imperfect, his Fore knowledge likewise of future "Contingencies would be uncertain, and the De-"signs of his Providence frustrated." But it may be observed in Answer, that it is no Diminution of the Honour of God, that, having made Men *free* Creatures, he governs them *according to their Natures*; that *Fore-knowledge* and *Fore-ordaining* are quite distinct, and the former may subsist † without

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* *The Reader may be referred to the cited Authorities, by consulting Dr.* Whitby *on the Five Points.*

† *As when God told* David, *that* Saul *would come to besiege him in* Keilah, *and the Men of the Place would deliver him up,* 1 Sam. 23. 11, 12. *neither of which Events took Place; also* Elisha *foretold* Benhadad *might certainly recover, yet should assuredly die,* 2 Kings 8, 10. *And the Apostle* Paul, *except these abide in the Ship ye cannot be saved,* Acts 27, 31. *tho' he had before expresly said, the Angel of God had told him, God had given him all that sailed with him. Ver.* 24, *&c.*

without the latter, tho' it be impossible for us to account for the perfect Manner of God's Foreknowledge; and lastly, that it is much more natural to represent God Almighty, bringing about his Purposes, by his all-comprehending *Knowledge* of Moral and Physical Causes with their Effects, by his *Wisdom* to direct these at his Pleasure, and by his *Power* to restrain what might thwart his Designs, and all in a Manner perfectly consistent with the Freedom of his Creatures; than by establishing an absolute Decree to make Men meer Machines, and himself first the Author of Evil, and then unjust in punishing it.

17.* Thus much of the divine Decrees in general, we proceed to speak a little more particularly to the Points mentioned; only premise as a Maxim or general Rule, that *where Texts of Scripture bear a Meaning, obviously consistent with our natural Notions of Reason and Justice, they should not be explained in a Manner inconsistent with both.*

Of ELECTION *and* REPROBATION.

18. THE Doctrine of *Reprobation* appear'd so absurd and shocking, that the Synod of *Dort* forbad the cited *Remonstrants* to insist upon it, and the *Predestinarians* in general don't care for it; yet it must necessarily take Place, on the Foot of a certain

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* *It may not be amiss to observe, that* Molina *and* Fontseca *invented a middle Science, by which they taught that as God sees all Things possible by his Knowledge of* simple Apprehension, *and all Things certainly future by his Knowledge of* Vision; *so* by this *he sees the Chain of all conditional Futurities and all their several Connections.*

certain Number's being elected to Life. The Ugliness of the Picture should therefore serve to shew, that the Source of all Order and Perfection can have no Hand in it.

19. The Texts they urge to prove *Reprobation* will easily admit of a different Explication. Thus, for Example, 'tis said, [a] *God made all Things for himself* (in the original to *answer* to themselves) *even the wicked for the Day of evil*, i. e. either the perseveringly wicked for certain Punishment, or rather, to be the Executioners of Evil to others. Again, God in a certain Place is said to [b] *blind the eyes and harden the hearts of Men, that they should not see, understand and be converted*, also *uses* [c] *Parables for the same Purpose*; but the former Expression may be translated, as referred to the People themselves, and so the *Greek* and *Chaldee* Paraphrase, also our blessed Lord and St. *Paul* render it in [d] parallel Places; and in like manner our blessed Lord himself also explains the latter Phrase, in another [e] Gospel. Again, 'tis written that [f] *Christ, the Head of the Corner, is made a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of Offence, even to them, who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed*, i. e. those who wilfully disobey the Gospel were appointed to stumble and fall at that Stone, or be bruised and destroyed by it, among the Crucifiers of the Messiah. Once more the Scriptures speak of Men [g] *before ordained to this condemnation*, or as the Words may be rendered, of whom it was before written, that this should be their Sentence or Punishment. Again mention

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[a] *Prov.* 16. 4. *with Isai.* 10. 5 *and* 15. [b] *John* 12. 39, 40. [c] *Mark* 4. 11, 12. *Luke* 8. 9, 10. [d] *Isai.* 44. 18. *with Matt.* 13. 14, 15. *Acts* 28. 27. [e] *Matt.* 13. 13, &c. *with John* 8, 43. *and* 3*d Chap.* 19, 20. [f] 1 *Pet.* 2. 7, 8. [g] *Jude* 4 *with* 2 *Pet.* 2. 4.

mention is made of the [h] *writing or enrolling of names in the Book of Life*, which denotes a Title to Life only to those enrolled; but not an unchangeable Title, for Mention is also made of a [i] *blotting* out. And *lastly*, God may be said in general to harden Mens Hearts, when he will not superadd to the Grace they abuse, what might prevail to their Conversion; as in the Case of [k] *Pharaoh*, and all wicked Men.

20. It is easy to conceive, that a beneficent Being may dispense his Favours at his Pleasure; but it is not consistent with our Notions of Justice, to allow that he may punish any, without having a Respect to personal *Demerit* or Guilt: According to the Scriptures, [l] *The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.*

21. Hence we can readily allow God can elect whole Nations to certain external Privileges, which he does not, for Reasons best known to himself, vouchsafe to others: as he chose of old [m] the Nation of the *Jews* to be his peculiar People, and under [n] the Gospel-Dispensation, several Nations, who have received the Sound thereof, who are therefore stiled his *elect* or chosen People, when there is not the

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[h] *Luke* 1. 20. *Heb.* 12, 23. *Rev.* 13. 8. *and* 17. 8. [i] *Rev.* 22. 19 *and* 3. 5. *Exod.* 32. 32, 33. [k] *Exo.* 7. 13. *with* 8. 15. *and* 1 *Sam.* 6. 6. *Prov.* 21. 29. *and Ch.* 28. 14. [l] *Rom.* 6. 23. [m] *Deut.* 4. 37. *and* 7*th Ch.* 6, 7, 8. *and Ch.* 10. 15, 16. *and Ch.* 14. 2. 1 *Kings* 3. 8. *Ps.* 105. 6, 43. *and* 135. 4, *and* 106. 5. *Isai.* 41. 8, 9. *and* 43. 20, 21. *and* 45. 4. *and* 65. 9 *with Jer.* 33. 24. *Ezek* 20. 5. *and Zech.* 3. 2. *Dan.* 11. 15. [n] 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *with* 1 *Pet.* 1. 1, 2. *and Ch.* 5. 13. 2 *John ver.* 1. *Col.* 3. 12. 2 *Tim.* 2. 10. *with Col.* 1, 24, 25.

the leaſt Room to ſuppoſe every Man among them was elected to Life eternal; [o] becauſe there are plain Intimations in Reſpect of *ſome* Perſons to the contrary, and many [p] *Exhortations, Cautions* and *Threats*, directed to *Chriſtians* in general, to make their Calling and Election ſure, to continue ſtedfaſt in the Faith, and not fall from Grace, leſt they provoke God to withdraw his Grace, and reſign them up to Puniſhment.

22. And for the ſame reaſon God may deprive Nations of theſe Privileges, as he did the [q] *Jews*: Yet proceed in the final Judgment, according to the Meaſure of Light afforded them, and the Talents put into their Hands; as it is ſaid [r] *to whom much is given of him ſhall be much required*, and conſequently to whom little, the leſs; and [s] *as many as have ſinned without Law ſhall alſo periſh without Law —The Work of the Law being written on their Hearts*, &c.

23. A *conditional* Election to Salvation is evidently inculcated in [t] many Places of the holy Scriptures, and is it not moſt natural to allow it in all? The Explication ſuited to particular Places may have ſome Difficulties, but as many are quite plain, and the Scriptures can't contradict themſelves, what is contained in the latter may ſerve as a Key to all.

24. In the Original, beſides the Word electing or chooſing, there occur the Words *foreknowing, purpoſing and fore-appointing*, which when they are not applied to our bleſſed Lord, always reſpect Churches

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[o] *See* 50, 51 *and* 52 *Paragraphs*. [p] 1 *Pet*. 1. 14. *Ch*. 2. 1, 11. *and Ch*. 4. 2, 3. 2 *Pet*. 1. 10. *Heb*. 3. 12, &c. *and* 4. 9, 11. *and* 6. 4, &c. *and* 10. 35, 38. *and* 12. 15, &c. [q] *Rom*. 11. 15. [r] *Luke* 12, 48. [s] *Rom*. 2. 12, 15. [t] 2 *Theſſ*. 2. 13. 2 *Pet*. 1. 10, 11. *alſo* 5, 6, 7 *Verſes*. *See alſo* 10, 11, 21, 38, 50, 51 *and* 52 *Paragraphs*.

[u] Churches and Nations in general, and not particular Persons. The Word translated *ordained*, in the Acts, [w] *to eternal Life* may be rendered *disposed*.

25. 'Twill be now pretty easy to explain most Texts brought to prove Election; as when Mention is made of [x] a *chosen Generation*, and God's *choosing the poor of the world rich in Faith*, that *many are called and few chosen*, &c. which are all to be understood of Persons professing *Christianity*. Again [y] *for the Elect's sake* (or Christians) *those days shall be shortned*, meaning of Distress and Trouble in the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. By the Phrase, [z] *gathering the Elect from the four winds*, may be understood the raising *Christian* Churches by the preaching of the Gospel. In another Place, [aa] *the Election according to grace* may be understood of the *Jews* at large, who embraced *Christianity*; for when it is added the *Election hath obtained, but the rest were blinded*; it can't be imagined that all the *Jews* who embraced *Christianity* were personally elected. Again [bb] *the Purpose of God as to his electing* Jacob *in Preference to* Esau should be understood of their Posterity. By [cc] *Vessels of Mercy prepared for Glory*, may be understood Persons prepared by Faith and Obedience. When it is asked, [dd] *who can lay any Thing to the Charge of God's elect?* 'tis easy to understand true Believers, whose Sins are not imputed to their Condemnation, upon their embracing the *Christian* Faith. Again, when the Apostle says, [ee] *I know your*

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[u] *Eph* 3. 11. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. 2 *Thess.* 2. 13. *Eph.* 1. 4. [w] *Acts* 13. 48. [x] 1 *Pet.* 2 9. *James* 2. 5. *Matth.* 20. 16. *and* 22. 14. [y] *Matt.* 24. 22. [z] *Verse* 31. [aa] *Rom.* 11. 5. [bb] *Rom.* 9. 11. *with Gen.* 25. 23. 2 *Sam.* 8. 14. *and Malac.* 1. 2, 3. [cc] *Rom.* 9. 23. [dd] *Rom.* 8. 33. [ee] 1 *Thess.* 1. 4, 5.

your Election, he assigns the Reason, *because the Word of God came to you not in word only but in Power.* Again, says he, [ff] *he hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him from the Foundation of the World*; i. e. agreeable to his foreseen Purpose, to choose to himself a People professing Faith in *Christ Jesus.* In another Place it is said, [gg] *whom he foreknew, he predestinated to be conformed to the Image of his Son.* and the Meaning may be, that it was the fixed Purpose of God, that all who embraced the *Christian* Religion, which he foresaw would take Place in the World, should be conformable to *Christ*, the Author of that Religion. Again 'tis said, [hh] *the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, the Lord knoweth who are his*, i. e. the Doctrine of the Resurrection standeth on the sure Foundation of God's Power to raise the Bodies of Men, and his Knowledge to distinguish his Saints, or otherwise God knows we the Apostles have been his faithful Servants in preaching that Doctrine, tho' *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* teach otherwise. When 'tis said [ii] *none can come to Christ, but those whom the Father draws and gives*; it may be easily conceived, that the Father may be said to do this, when he vouchsafes the Evidences of *Christ*'s Mission, and all the usual Means of his Grace. Those who refuse to come to *Christ* can't surely be said to be excluded by a Decree of God, for that might be urged as a Plea for them, whereas in the Holy Scriptures they are evidently charged [kk] with the actual Guilt of evil Works, of hating the Light, not having the Word of God abiding in them, nor being of God, loving the

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[ff] *Eph.* 1. 3, 4. [gg] *Rom* 8. 29. *with Eph.* 1. 4, 9. [hh] 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *and* 2 *Cor.* 8. 3. [ii] *John* 6. 44. *and* 17. 12. [kk] *Ch.* 3. 19, 20. *and* 5. 38, 46. *and* 8. 47. *and* 5. 44. *and* 10. 26.

the Praise of Men more than of God, not being the Sheep of *Christ*, i. e. teachable and obedient to their Shepherd, &c. [11] In a Word the *Reprobate*, as the Word itself imports, are described in the Holy Scriptures to be Persons *disapproved*, on Account of their *own personal Behaviour*, and for no other Reason.

Of REDEMPTION.

26. THE *Predestinarians* say *Christ Jesus* died to redeem from Sin and Death, the Elect only; and their Opponents say, that he tasted Death for every Man, or for all in general; and hence comes the Distinction among the Baptists, of *Generals* and *Particulars*.

27. The *Predestinarians* say indeed *Christ* died *sufficiently* for all, and so far as to procure Pardon and Salvation for them, if they will *repent*; but what can the Words *sufficient* and *repent* mean, when 'tis asserted the Intention of God and *Christ* was, that the Death of *Christ* should only avail the *Elect*.

28. *Christ* therefore died for *all*, or that *all* might reap the Benefit of his Death. [a] He shed his Blood to establish the new Covenant, whose Conditions of *Faith* and *Obedience* equally extend to *all*. He has not indeed purchased the actual Pardon of Sins for all Men, but by his Death has put *all* in a [b] Capacity of being pardoned. [c] He has reconciled us to God by the Blood of his Cross, attoning for our past Sins, and opening a Door for our acceptance,

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[11] 2 *Tim.* 3. 8. *Rom.* 1. 20.—28. *Tit.* 1. 16. 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. [a] *Luke* 22. 20. *Heb.* 9. 12, &c. [b] *Acts* 20. 21 *and* 26. 18. [c] *Col.* 1. 20. 2 *Cor.* 5. 15, 18, 19.

ance, whenever we ſhall liſten to the gracious Calls of God, and turn to him by an unfeigned Repentance, and the future Amendment of our Lives.

29. And the Expreſſions in the holy Scriptures, which confirm this Doctrine, are numerous, clear and expreſſive. [d] *Chriſt* is the Saviour of the *World*, and of *all Men*; [e] who gave himſelf a Ranſom for *all*; [f] taſted Death for *every Man*; [g] was a Propitiation not for *ours* only, but alſo for the Sins of the *whole World*, [h] he is not willing that *any* ſhould periſh, but that *all* ſhould come to Repentance, to the Acknowledgment of the Truth, and be ſaved; [i] the Grace of God hath appeared to *all* Men, *&c.* and the Reaſons are likewiſe general, *viz.* becauſe God is the [k] God of *all*, and there is [l] but one Mediator between God and *Man* at large, [m] and as the brazen Serpent was held out to *all* the *Jews*, without Exception, ſo the Mediator interpoſes for *all* the World, without Exception; therefore both God and *Chriſt* would have *all* ſaved.

30. And leſt thoſe general Expreſſions may ſeem capable of a more limited Senſe, there are ſome particularly emphatick, as when St. *Paul* declares [n] *that as by the Offence of one Judgment came upon* all *Men to Condemnation, ſo by the Righteouſneſs of one, the free Gift came upon* all *Men to Juſtification*. In which Paſſage, Juſtification is evidently as extenſive as Condemnation. Alſo when he repreſents [o] *the weak Brother periſhing for whom* Chriſt *died, and ſinning wilfully* and woefully; for from theſe Paſſages it ſeems plain, that *Chriſt* died for thoſe that *periſh*, and conſequently for *all* Men.

31. The

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[d] *John* 4. 42. 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. [e] 1 *Tim.* 2. 6. [f] *Heb.* 2. 9. [g] 1 *John* 2. 2. [h] 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. [i] *Tit.* 2. 12.—14. [k] *Rom.* 3. 29. [l] 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. [m] *John* 3. 14. [n] *Rom.* 5. 18. [o] 1 *Cor.* 8. 11. *Rom.* 14. 15. *Heb.* 10. 26. *Mat.* 18. 6. 2 *Pet.* 2. 1.

31. The Objection against *Christ*'s dying for *all*, when only *some* are saved, *as argueing something vain, imperfect, and consequently unworthy of God and Christ*, was answered under the general Reasons; by observing that God treats his Creatures according to their Natures, and therefore the Defects mentioned are not in God, but in the Creature. Nor can the Wisdom of God be said to be frustrated, in *expecting* the Salvation of *all* Men, by the Death of his Son; since it does not in the least appear, that he ever did *expect* it, and the Scheme of his Providence is fully accomplished without it. Again, to say *Christ died* to procure Pardon, Faith and Repentance for the Elect only, argues Ignorance of the *Nature*, 1*st*. Of *Christ himself*, who could neither want Power, or Will to procure them these Things without dying. 2*dly*. Of a *Covenant*, which implies the mutual Act of two Parties, of the Sinner therefore as well as his Saviour. 3*dly*. Of a *Sacrifice*, which only attones for past Offences, and therefore Sanctification to Life eternal must proceed from some other Cause than barely *Christ*'s Death. Lastly, Of *Faith* and *Repentance*, the former of which is an Assent to the divine Testimony, and the latter the Conversion of the Will from Sin to God; as therefore both are required, they must be both necessary, as well as *Christ's Death*, to Man's Salvation. As for the seeming Absurdity in representing *Christ* equally to have died for *Judas* as for *Peter*, 'tis sufficiently obviated, by observing the Souls of both proceeded equally from the Father of Spirits, were equally made in his Image, were under equal Circumstances in respect of his Favour, stood in equal Need of a Saviour, and were equally capable of Redemption, why therefore antecedently to any Good or Evil they had done, should this Saviour die for the one rather than the other?

32. But they argue against *General* Redemption from several Passages in the holy Scriptures, as when

when *Christ* says, [p] *I pray not for the World, but for them that thou hast given me out of the World*; the Meaning of which is, that just at that Time he was praying indeed for his Apostles and Followers only, however he gives plain Intimations his Prayer was made for the sake of a *sinful World*, that by the Means of his Servants, the *World* might believe. Again they alledge, that those for whom *Christ* died may say, [q] *Who shall condemn us?* &c. and as *all* can't say this, *Christ* did not die for *all*. But it may be observed, the Text does not say that *all* for whom *Christ* died can say this, but only the Persons described, *viz.* the *Faithful*, who truly believe in *Christ Jesus*, and *walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit*. Again 'tis said, that to [r] *all* for whom God delivered up his Son, *he, together with him, will freely give all Things*; and this they observe is not true of the whole World. But the Answer is the same as before, the Apostle only says *us all*, meaning *Believers*. Again, say they, those that are [s] *reconciled by the Death of Christ shall be saved by his Life*; but *all* are not *saved*, and consequently not *reconciled* by his Death. But it may be answered, that if a full Reconciliation is intended, which includes a Justification by Faith in the Death of *Christ*, the Place again will be limitted to Believers, and those have undoubtedly the glorious Prospect of being saved, 'thro' the living Influences of *Christ Jesus*. Further, say they, *Christ* had the greatest Love for the Persons he died for; consequently not for all Men, for all would then be saved. But the Words of the Text are, [t] *no Man shews greater Love*, which are far from restraining the higher Effects of *Christ*'s Love to his faithful ones. Again, *Christ* is said to have died *for*

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[p] *John* 17. 9. [q] *Rom.* 8. 34. [r] *Rom.* 8. 32. [s] *Rom.* 5. 9. [t] *John* 15. 13.

for [a] *his Sheep*, and *for many*, &c. which Expressions imply a Limitation. But 'tis easy to remark these particular Expressions are included in the general, and have this obvious Reason for using them, that tho' *Christ* died for *all*; the *Righteous* only, or his Sheep, *eventually* and *emphatically* receive the Benefit of his Death. Lastly, it is objected, that whether we say the Elect only shall be saved, or those who perform the Conditions of the New Covenant; the Number and Quality of the Men are the same, their State equally remediless, and God's Goodness still questionable. And the Answer is, that it is true indeed the *Persons* saved are the same, but the *Doctrines* are not; for the former seems to charge God with *Want* of Love to his Creatures, in making *no* Provision for their Happiness, and even rendering it *impossible*; which the latter *does not*.

Of GRACE.

33. THE Grace of God imports his Favour or kind Affections to us, and may be used for any Expression of it. [a] Thus the Gospel is styled the Grace of God which brings Salvation, and the Word of Grace, *&c.* the calling of Sinners to embrace it, is said to be the calling them by Grace; when they embrace the Call, they are said to be saved by Grace; or put in the way of Salvation, and the Gift of God's holy Spirit is stiled the Grace of God.

34. But

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[a] *John* 10. 15. *and* 15. 13, 14. *Eph.* 2. 26. *Mat.* 20. 28. *and* 26. 28. *Rom.* 5. 19. *Heb.* 9. 28, 29. [a] *Tit.* 2. 11. *Acts* 20. 32. *John* 1. 17. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Tit.* 3. 4. 5.

34. But it seems necessary to assert, that besides external Means, God inwardly works by his Spirit on the Hearts; from those [b] Expressions in the holy Scriptures, which represent the Spirit *striving* with Men, *quickening* them, *working* in them, *resisted* by them, *&c.*

35. The manner may be fitly illustrated, by the Methods which Men take with their Fellow-Creatures, in enlightening the Understanding, and moving the Affections by proper Motives; for so the Spirit of God may be conceived to operate on the Mind, by [c] enlightening it, bringing Truths to its Remembrance, and enforcing them by proper Motives addressed to the Will, according to the Apostle *Paul*, *The Eyes of our Understanding being thus enlightened to know what is the Hope of our Calling, and the glorious Riches of the Inheritance of the Saints.* And in this whole Procedure there does not appear to be any Force offered to the Man, or any Necessity imposed upon him.

36. The Grace of God is conspicuous in laying the Plan of our Redemption and Salvation, in providing a Mediator for us, in affording his Word, Ministers and Spirit, as Means and Helps to promote it, and in crowning the whole with eternal Life. And the Operations of God's Spirit, according to their Tendency, may be called *exciting*, *preventing*, *assisting*, or *subsequent* Grace. The Gospel, and all absolute Means afforded for our Salvation, may be called *common* Grace, and such as depend on the Conditions of asking, seeking, improving, &c. *special* Grace.

37. But the *Predestinarians* advance, that the several Means mentioned will not be effectual to the

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[b] *Gen.* 6. 3. *Rom.* 8. 2. *Philip.* 2. 13. *Heb.* 13. 21. *Acts* 7. 51. *John* 3. 5, 6, 8. *Rom.* 8. 13. [c] *Eph.* 1. 18. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.

the Conversion of Men, unless they are urged on their Consciences with an invincible Force; tho' they seem to contradict themselves, when they allow preventing Grace to be universal and irresistible, and that God works certain Effects in all Men towards their Conversion, 'till he is forsaken of them, &c. since they assert no real Effect can be produced from this Procedure towards Mens Conversion: Consequently it can't be said God *seriously* intended it, even when he used Means tending to promote it.

38 And what more need be said against such a peculiar irresistible Force, but to reflect on God's representing himself, in the holy Scriptures, to have done [d] what was *sufficient* for Mens Reformation, and that he [e] *earnestly desires* it; also that to this End all his [f] *Commands, Exhortations, Wonders* and *Threats* are directed, with *Promises* of Pardon, Life and Salvation; for if they are wholly passive, *Impossibilities* would be plainly required of them, the Procedure of God would seem to be a *Mockery*, his Expostulations *unreasonable*, and their Condemnation *unjust*. As to the Plea, that the *Inability* derived from our first Parents may be esteemed as our own Guilt, and we may be punished justly on that Account, we shall proceed presently to consider it.

39. But Arguments are drawn for *invincible* Grace, 1. From the Nature of Conversion, which represents

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[d] *Isa.* 5. 4. [e] *Deut.* 5. 29, *and* 32. 29. *Ps.* 50. 21. *Jer.* 51. 9. *Ezek.* 24. 13. *John* 5. 40. [f] *Isa.* 1. 16. *Deut.* 10. 16. *Jer.* 4. 4, 14. *Eph.* 4. 22. *Psal.* 7. 11. &c. *Jer.* 15. 1. *and* 18. 11. *Mark* 6. 6. *Luke* 13. 3, 5. *John* 8. 24. *Isa.* 1. 18. *and* 55. 7. *Jer.* 4. 14. *Ezek.* 18. 30, 31, 32. *Isa.* 1. 2, 3. *Deut.* 32. 6. *Ps.* 106. 7. *Jer.* 2. 17. *and* 5, 6, 7. *Ch* 5. 23, 24. *Deut.* 8. 5, 6. *Isa.* 26. 9. *and* 59. 18, 19. *Lev.* 26. 14.—17. &c.

represents us *passive*, and that we must pass thro' a *Resurrection*, *Creation*, and *new Birth*, &c. The Passage respecting a [g] *Resurrection*, may be very naturally explained of the Power of God in raising, not Souls dead in Sin, but the dead Bodies of Believers; those respecting a [h] *Creation*, may be understood of the Power and Grace of God in beginning and carrying on the Work of our Conversion, without denying us some Degree of Activity; and a *Passiveness* can't be inferred from the [i] *new Birth*, as 'tis ascribed to the [k] Word and Ministers, as well as Spirit of God, which are evidently Means addressed to the natural Powers of our Understanding and Will, *&c.* 2. From the State and Inability of unconverted Persons. They are said to *be* [l] *dead in Trespasses and Sins*; 'tis true, and yet they are evidently considered as capable [m] of receiving pathetick Addresses to rise out of that State. Again it is said, [n] *the natural Man neither receives, nor can know the Things of the Spirit of God*; but these Words may be referred to the Disputers of the World, who expected to make out by Reason such Points, as could only be proved by a divine Revelation. The Phrases of not being [o] *sufficient of our selves*, and *that we can do nothing without Christ*, respects the Ministers of *Christ*. And those of an [p] *evil Tree's not being able to bring forth good Fruit*, or a [q] *carnal Mind to be subject to the Law of God.* may be well understood, as carrying a Restriction from their very Natnre, *i. e.*

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[g] *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. [h] 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *Gal.* 6. 10. *Eph.* 2. 10. [i] *John* 3. 5. [k] 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. *Jam.* 1. 18 1 *Cor.* 4. 15. [l] *Eph.* 2. 1. *Colos.* 2. 13. [m] *Eph.* 5. 14. *Isa.* 55. 3. *Ezek.* 18. 32. *and* 33. 11. [n] 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. [o] 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *John* 15. 5. [p] *Mat.* 7. 18. [q] *Rom.* 8. 7.

i. e. as long as evil and carnal, without implying an absolute Impossibility; under which State all Advice to a Change would seem impertinent. 3. From what is said of God himself, *viz.* 1. that he [r] *gives Faith and Repentance*, and *opens the Heart*, &c. which Expressions may be well understood of the Means by which those are obtained; *i. e.* as he gives Riches and Wisdom to those, who by Labour and Application diligently seek to obtain them, *&c.* so *Faith* and *Repentance* to those who attend to the Calls of his Providence and Spirit, *&c.* 2. that he [s] *circumcises the Heart, gives a new one, writes his Law on it*, &c. but that God does not these Things without us, appears from his exhorting us [t] to do the very same, or to take Steps proper for it. Besides the Promises mentioned refer to the whole Nation of the *Jews*, and not to particular Persons. 3. [u] that *he worketh in us, both to will and to do*, and *turns us to himself*; and 'tis true he does so, but not without our Concurrence, and therefore [w] *invites* us to do the like. *Lastly*, from such Places, as seem to shew an Absurdity in Man's co-operating with God, and his Will's consenting to his own Conversion, as when *Paul* says, [x] *who made thee to differ from another?* but this Place manifestly refers to the extraordinary Gifts of God's Spirit. Again [y] *we are saved by Grace, and not of Works, lest any Man should boast, or glory*; but the Meaning of this Passage seems to

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[r] *Eph.* 2. 8. *Acts* 11. 18. *and* 16. 14. [s] *Deut.* 30. 6. *Ezek.* 11. 19. *and* 36. 26. *Jer.* 31. 33. [t] *Acts* 17. 30. 1 *John* 3. 23. *Jer.* 4. 4. *and* 9. 26. *and* 32. 39, 40. *with Heb.* 8. 13. *Deut.* 11. 18. *Ezek.* 18. 31. *Isa.* 1. 16. *Jer.* 4. 14. *James* 4. 8. [u] *Philip.* 2. 13. *Heb.* 13. 21. *Jer.* 31. 18. [w] *Phil.* 2. 12. *See also the Texts to Reference* [t]. [x] 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. [y] 1 *Cor.* 1. 29, 31. *Eph.* 2. 9.

be this, we are put into a *State* of Salvation by the *free Grace* of God thro' *Jesus Christ*, and both our Faith and Works proceed from that *State*, and depend on its constant Influences, accompanied by the divine Blessing, as do our final Justification and Salvation. And indeed it may be remarked in general, that to divine Grace is owing one Nation's enjoying the Gospel in Preference to another, and therefore none can glory before God of what they do of themselves; but may [z] of what by the divine Grace they are enabled to do. Again they say, if Grace did not work with an *invincible* Force, the Conversion even of a single Person might be uncertain. But 'tis surely more comfortable for the Unregenerate, to hear that a sufficient Provision is made for their Recovery, if they will not themselves *wilfully* neglect or oppose the Means; than that they are *eternally excluded*, by an Act of Preterition or Exclusion. Besides the Possibility of missing the End proposed neither *excludes* any, nor *impeaches* the Wisdom of God, our gracious Physician and Friend, who has prescribed our Cure.

Of the POWERS *of our Fallen Nature.*

40. THE *Predestinarians* say, by the Fall of *Adam* his Posterity is become *spiritually* dead, and is consequently in a *damnable* Condition, and utterly uncapable of being reclaimed by any Arguments or Motives offered by God, or by the Grace afforded to all Men in the Gospel, and the very Workings of his Spirit itself, unless urged with an *invincible* Force. Or in other Words, "Fallen

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[z] 1 *Cor.* 9. 15, 16. 2 *Cor.* 11. 10. *and* 1. 12. *Gal.* 6. 4. *Rejoicing, or Boasting, as the Word may be rendered.*

"Fallen Man, ſay they, can neither 1. refrain "from the negative Precept of coveting, nor ob- "ſerve the poſitive one of loving God with his "whole Heart. 2. His Actions which are mate- "rially good are formally Sins, as they are not "done from a good Principle and to a good End, "*i. e.* the Love and Glory of God. 3. He can't "chooſe what is good, but is become ſo far a Ser- "vant of Sin, that all that he does is Sin, and "*laſtly*, to do a ſingle good Action implies juſtify- "ing Grace and Faith."

41. 'Tis ſtrange the Scriptures ſhould be ſo ſilent about this Point, as that no one of the few Places brought to prove the Aſſertion are ſufficiently clear; the Texts alſo immediately reſpecting the Fall and Puniſhment of Man, [a] import only *Labour*, *Sorrow*, and a *natural Death*; and laſtly, throughout the whole Scriptures, the *Impotency* of Man is aſcribed to *acquired* Cauſes, and not ſuch as are *born* with him.

42. The Scriptures copiouſly deſcribe the [b] *Ignorance*, *Darkneſs* and *Deadneſs* of the heathen World, thro' their great Wickedneſs and long contracted Habits: but it does not appear, they are charged on Mankind in general, by Reaſon of the *Fall*; on the contrary, the general Complaint is of their *own* [c] Obſtinacy, Rebellion, Inconſideration, Folly and Wickedneſs, *&c.*

43. If we enquire how we are affected by the Sin of *Adam?* They anſwer, 'tis by a ſpecial Decree of God; for 'tis not poſſible otherwiſe to account how * natural Propagation could derive down

[a] *Gen.* 2. 17. *and* 3. *Ch.* 7. *to End.* *Rom.* 5. 12.—20. 1 *Cor.* 15. 21, 22. [b] *John* 12. 31. *Eph.* 2. 1, 2. *Rom.* 1. 21. *Eph.* 4. 18. [c] *Exod.* 16. 28. *Numb.* 14. 11. *Prov.* 1. 22. *Jer.* 4. 14. *and* 13. 27.

* *The Difficulty ſeems greatly increaſed by reflecting, that as the Body of Man is formed in the Womb by the*

his *Corruption* to us, and yet deprive us of the Benefit of his *Repentance* and *habitual Righteousness*. But how can *Adam*'s Sin be truly said to be ours, when the Apostle says, it was [d] *for the Sin of ONE many died, even those who sinned not after his Similitude*, tho' figuratively it may be allowed we all sinned in him, because treated as if we had actually sinned, in which Sense even [e] *Christ* himself *was made Sin for us?* As for the *Compact* between God and *Adam*, which they frame for the Purpose, it seems to be a meer Invention of the Schools; for with what Face of Reason, can a gracious God be said to *compact* for the Guilt of one to destroy Myriads of [f] harmless Infants and others his Descendants?

44. If an Appeal be made to Fact, 'twill be allowed, there is every where in the World a great *Corruption* of Manners, with a Variety of *Diseases*, and *Death* in many Shapes; that these naturally arise in the *present* Constitution of the World, which took its Rise from *Original* Sin, as a Root; that hereby various Scenes of Action open, in which the virtuous Dispositions and Graces of Men are try'd; but there is a wide Difference between a *corrupted* State of Things and *Corruption* itself, a *disabled* and a *dead* Man.

45. What an Insult upon the Understanding must it be, to say God treats his poor Creatures, as a crazed Physician might a languishing dying Patient, in promising him a perfect Recovery, provided he would follow his Prescriptions, and rise and eat and walk abroad in the Fields, when he knows 'tis utterly impossible? Yet thus our gracious God must be

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the Power and Wisdom of Almighty God; so 'tis generally allowed, the Soul immediately proceeds from him. How then comes the dreadful Stain?

[d] *Rom.* 5. 14, 15. [e] 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. [f] *This is the*

be confidered in his Procedure with his Creatures, in exhorting, encouraging and threatning them, under Circumftances which render them equally weak, and the Service equally impoffible. And 'tis pretended they deferve to be punifhed on a Failure of Duty, becaufe their *firft Father* finned, and that is the fame Thing as if *they* had actually finned, fince they were in his Loins.———The Reafoning indeed is very extraordinary.

46. The permitting the Effects of *Adam*'s Sin, in the prefent Conftitution of Things, and the confequent Corruption which we fee in the World, may anfwer very wife Purpofes in a *State of Trial*, as ours certainly is; but the very Notion of a Trial fuppofes a fufficient *Meafure* of Wifdom and Strength, and furely, whatever the State of Man by the Fall be fuppofed to be, fuch a *Meafure* may be eafily conceived to be imparted by God, as will enable to difcharge all the Duties which he has enjoined, without any uncontroulable Biafs to Sin and Death, and in this Power and Self-Determination, the true Notion of Liberty feems to confift.

47. But we proceed to mention fome confiderable Texts urged to prove Man's Propenfity to Sin by the Fall; as [g] *Who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean*; the Meaning of which feems to be no more, than from Parents obnoxious to Sin will proceed Children obnoxious to Sin alfo, as they become capable of difcerning betwixt Good and Evil; for 'tis obvious, and will generally be allowed, that [h] *in many Things we offend all*, and therefore muft be juftified by an Act of Grace only; for [i] *how*

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the natural yet fhocking Confequence of the Doctrine, and maintained by Calvin *and many others; yet our bleffed Lord, in direct Oppofition fays*, of fuch is the Kingdom of God.

[g] *Job*. 14. 4. [h] *James* 3. 2. [i] *Job* 15. 14. *and* 25. 4.

can Man be just before God, or how can he be clean that is born of Woman, i. e. considering the actual Degeneracy of Mankind, tho' it is true, the Words may be considered in Reference in God, and then not Man only, but the Heavens and all therein are unclean in his Presence. Again, says the *Psalmist*, [k] *Behold I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me*; or, as the Place might be translated, *I was born in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother nurse me.* And the Words may be understood proverbially, in the same Sense, as when 'tis said [l] *the Wicked go astray from the Womb*, and *speak Lies as soon as they are born.* And in the same hyperbolical Manner, *Job* says [m] *the Fatherless were brought up with him from his Youth*, and *he had guided the Widow from his Mothers Womb.* Can the Places mentioned possibly mean that a Man, as Man, can't think, speak or do one good Thing? Common Sense, one would think, might pronounce in this Case. Again 'tis said in *Genesis*, [n] *the Imaginations of Mens Hearts were only Evil continually*; but how unreasonable is it to ascribe to all Men, what belongs only to the worst of Men, as those destroyed by the Deluge undoubtedly were. As for the several Passages in the 3d Chapter of the *Romans*, from the 10th Verse to 20, describing the Wickedness of Mankind at large, or perhaps of the *Jews*, since no Mention is made of *Adam*, or his Sin; it seems most natural to understand them of *actual, habitual* Wickedness, and not *imputed* and *derived* It was observed before, that the Phrase in the *Ephesians*, applied to *Heathens, viz.* [o] *Dead in Trespasses and Sins*, did not render the Persons absolutely uncapable of being addressed to, and

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[k] *Psal.* 51. 5. [l] *Psal.* 58. 3. *Isai.* 48. 8. [m] *Job.* 31. 18. *See also Isai.* 49. 1. [n] *Gen.* 6. 5. [o] *Eph.* 2. 1.

and call'd upon to *rise* from that *State*; and consequently not a *State* necessarily subjecting them to Sin and Death, but rather that into which they had brought themselves, and that on that Account only, they and others might be said to be [p] *by Nature*, or in their *acquired* Nature, *the Children of Wrath*; and also [q] *without Strength* to relieve themselves till *Christ* came to establish a new Covenant in his Blood, and offer them Terms of Grace, Assistance and Acceptance. Hence also habitual Sinners, who are *carnally minded, and in the Flesh*, or walk after the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof, *may be easily conceived to be at* [r] *Enmity with God*; as long as they are such, or till by Regeneration they have subdued that corrupt animal Nature; but it is hard to imagine how the Descendants of *Adam* should all be in this Condition, Myriads of whom go off the Stage of Life in Infancy. Again it is written, that [s] *that which is born of the Flesh is Flesh*; and therefore it is necessary that Men should be *born of the Spirit*. And it it is true by natural Generation Man is born merely Man, *i. e.* with a rational Soul and organized Body, which is quite distinct from the divine and spiritual Life, formed in him by the Operation of God's Spirit. Again Man is said to [t] *have been made upright, and to have found out many Inventions*; and the Words may well refer either to the Corruption of the Age in which *Solomon* wrote, or of any Age; for as nothing is said in them peculiarly relating to *Adam*, they may be understood to extend to all his Posterity, *viz.* that they come upright out of the Hands of God, but corrupt themselves with numerous sinful Inventions. *Lastly*, there is said to be [u] *a Law in Mens Members, which wars against that in their Minds*;

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[p] *Eph.* 2. 3. [q] *Rom.* 5. 6. [r] *Rom.* 8. 7, 8.
[s] *John* 3. 6. [t] *Eccles.* 7. 29. [u] *Rom.* 7. 23.

but this Law may only denote an actual Degeneracy, and the Force of bad contracted Habits; for to suppose it necessary by Nature, is to *abate*, if not intirely *remove*, the Sin; as 'tis hard to conceive a Person can be guilty of a Fault he could not possibly avoid. It was St. *Austin*'s Definition of a Sin, " that it is the *Will* to do that, from which " we have the *Liberty* to abstain; and therefore " Sin must be *free from Necessity*, and none should " say they shall be punished, because they *can't* " keep the Law of God, but because they *will* " *not*.

Of PERSEVERANCE.

48. IT is acknowledged that the Perseverance of Saints is owing to the free Grace of God, which is always effectually engaged in the Behalf of those, who conscientiously use the Means he has appointed, and do not wickedly depart from his Ways; but it is deny'd that God has ever absolutely engaged to preserve them.

49. Neither the *Intercession* of *Christ* or the Saints, nor the *new-Nature* can be urged as the Ground of their Perseverance; for 'tis as reasonable, these should secure them from Sin, which 'tis own'd is contrary to Experience; for Believers, they say, may be guilty of Drunkenness and Incest, as *Noah* and *Lot*, Murder and Adultery as *David*, gross Idolatry as *Solomon*, Denials of our Lord with Oaths and Imprecations, as St. *Peter*, &c. and yet not fall totally and finally. The *Decree* therefore alone is the Ground of their Perseverance, and so all Arguments drawn from Intercession, the new Nature, Faith, *&c.* are in a Manner useless.

50. The

50. The Scriptures plainly assert, that righteous Men may fall, as [a] *Ezekiel* very fully in Answer to the murmuring Complaints of the *Jews*, that *they died for their Father's Sins*. The Prophet *Jeremiah* assures them also that *every one shall die for his own Iniquity*. The Author also to the *Hebrews* to the same Purpose, [b] *when such Men fall away, it is impossible to renew them again by Repentance.*——*And there is no more Sacrifice for their Sin*——Again *the Just shall live by Faith, but if* * *he draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him.* And the Apostle *Peter*, [c] *If those that have escaped the Pollution of the World thro' the Knowledge of Christ are again entangled and overcome, their latter End is worse than the Beginning.*

51. *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* are said [d] *to have made Ship-wreck of the Faith*, and *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* [e] to have *erred from the Truth*; and the Apostle *Paul* complains of several [f] *Galatians*, as of *Persons bewitched*, who *had been the Sons of God*, and *had ran well*, but were *removed from him that called them to another Gospel*. Our blessed Saviour *also foretold*, [g] that *Iniquity should abound*, and the *Love of many wax cold*, and that those only *that endured to the End should be saved*. He supposes [h] *the Branches may not abide in him, but be cast out and wither*, and that [i] *the Salt may lose its Savour*, and be *cast out and trodden under Foot* of Men——Speaks

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[a] *Ezek.* 18. 24, 26. *and* 33. 13, 18. *Jer.* 31. 29. [b] *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. *and* 10. 26—29. V. 38. [c] 2 *Pet.* 2. 18, 20, 21, 22. [d] 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. [e] 2 *Tim.* 2. 17, 18, [f] *Gal.* 3. 1. *and* 4. 6. *and* 5. 7. *and* 1. 6, 7. [g] *Matt.* 24. 12, 13. [h] *John* 15. 6. [i] *Matt.* 5. 13.

* 'Tis any Man *in our Translation, but the Words being only Supplemental, 'tis very natural to understand the Just Man.*

alſo of the Degeneracy [k] of Churches, and threatens to *remove the Candleſtick out of its Place.* And the Apoſtle *Paul* alledges, [l] *the Spirit ſays expreſsly, that in the latter Times ſome ſhall depart from the Faith*; and elſewhere that *Chriſtians* may [m] *defile the Temple of their Bodies*, and provoke God to *deſtroy them*, that by Fornication [n] *they may ceaſe to be Members of Chriſt*, and [o] *receive the Grace of God in vain.*

52. The whole Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* is againſt this Doctrine, in its repeated *Exhortations*, [p] *to hold faſt the Profeſſion of Faith*, &c. *cautious*, [q] *to beware of an evil Heart*, &c. *Encouragements*, to [r] *Confidence in God*, &c. declaring them *to be of the* [s] *Houſhold of Chriſt* only conditionally, and *threatning* thoſe that [t] *drew back to Perdition*, &c. And the ſame may be obſerved in numberleſs other Places of the holy Scriptures. The Caution therefore of the Apoſtle deſerves our utmoſt Attention, [u] *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth take heed, leſt he fall.*

53. We proceed now to mention the Places produced to prove final Perſeverance, and they are theſe following. God promiſed [w] *to give his People one Heart and one Way that they might fear him*; but this Promiſe was made to a whole Nation, and ſo can't be intended for Individuals; beſides God may well be ſaid to give the Thing, when he gives the Means proper to procure it; as he gives *Riches* and *Wiſdom*, &c. Again *Chriſt* promiſes, that he who comes to him ſhall [x] *never hunger*

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[k] *Rev. 2d and 3d Chap. Alſo* 2. 5. [l] 2 *Theſ.* 2. 6. [m] 1 *Cor.* 3. 16, 17. [n] 1 *Cor.* 6. 15. [o] 2 Cor. 6. 1. [p] Heb. 3. 6, 14. *and* 4. 14. *and* 6. 11, 12. *and* 10. 23. *and* 12. 28. [q] *Chap.* 3. 11, 12. [r] *and* 10. 35, 36. [s] *and* 3. 6. [t] *Chap.* 6. 4, 5, 6. *and* 10. 26—29. *and V.* 38. [u] 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. [w] *Jer.* 32. 39. [x] *John* 6. 35. *and* 4. 14. *and* 14. 16.

hunger nor thirst, which Promise being made of the Spirit, may be understood either conditionally, as long as it resides in the Believer, or in respect of its satisfying Influences on the Soul. *Christ's* Promise [y] *that none shall pluck his Sheep out of his hands*, respects his Power to defend them, as long as they adhere to him, but does not prove they shall never withdraw from his Protection. When he engages they shall not be [z] *tempted above what they are able to bear*, and he will [aa] *keep them unblameable to the End*, and [bb] *perfect the good Work begun unto the Day of the Lord Jesus*, and [cc] *sanctify them*, and [dd] *establish them*, and *keep them from Evil*, &c. The Answer to all these Passages is, that God does what has a Tendency, and is sufficient for these Purposes, without ensuring the Effect, more than when he says, [ee] *I have purged* Jerusalem, *and she was not purged*; and again, [ff] *This People have I formed for my Praise, but thou hast not called upon me* O Jacob, *thou hast been weary of me* O Israel, *&c.* The Expression [gg] *to deceive if it were possible the very Elect* may only imply a great Difficulty, as they had been before expresly cautioned by our blessed Saviour against Deceivers; for if taken strictly, those Cautions would have been needless. Again, when 'tis said, [hh] *'tis the Will of the Father, that the Believer should not perish*, it can't possibly be understood of a nominal Believer, and if of real ones, 'tis plain that their Perseverance is included. As to the Phrase [ii] *the Lord hath not cast off his People whom he foreknew*, it only imports, that God had not so intirely rejected the *Jews*, whom he foreknew,

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[y] *John* 10. 28. [z] 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. [aa] *Chap.* 1. 9, 10. [bb] *Philip.* 1. 6. [cc] 1 *Thess.* 5. 23, 24. [dd] *and* 2 *Thess.* 3. 3. [ee] *Ezek.* 24. 13. [ff] *Isai.* 43. 22, 23. [gg] *Matt.* 24. 24. [hh] *John* 6. 39, 40. [ii] *Rom.* 11. 2.

knew, and chose to be his People before all other Nations; but had a Remnant among them, and would afterwards receive them into Favour. Again [kk] *whom God justifies he glorifies*, i. e. those whose religious Behaviour he approves, especially in Circumstances of Trial, he glorifies. Again, [ll] *the Spirit seals Believers to the Day of Redemption, and is an Earnest of it in their Hearts*, i. e. the Spirit poured out on Believers was to them an *Evidence* of the Truth of *Christianity*, and consequently of their Redemption by *Christ*, and its powerful encouraging and transforming Influences, an *Earnest* of their future Inheritance with him in Glory. Again 'tis said, [mm] *the Faithful are kept by the Power of God thro' Faith to Salvation*, i. e. 'tis by the Power of God any are kept, but it does not follow all are. Again, [nn] *they went out from us, but were not all of us, or they would no doubt have continued with us*, i. e. Either they were not sincere Professors of Christianity, and therefore left us, or certain false Teachers went out of *Judea*, where we the Apostles were, but did not teach the *Christian* Doctrines. *Lastly*, [oo] *Every one that is born of God sinneth not, neither can sin, because his Seed abideth in him*, i. e. because 'tis contrary to the Nature of the Word and Spirit of God, when duly attended to, to allow the wilful Commission of Sin; but if the *former* be neglected, and the *latter* quenched, the righteous Man may forsake his Righteousness, and perish everlastingly.

Of

[kk] *Rom.* 8. 29. [ll] *Eph.* 4. 30. *and* 1. 13. 2 *Cor.* 1. 21, 22, *Gal.* 4. 6. [mm] 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. [nn] 1 *John* 2. 19. [oo] 1 *John* 3. 9.

Of the SPIRIT *of the* PREDESTINARIANS.

54. WHEN the *Papiſts* are charged with having a Spirit of Perſecution, 'tis not to be underſtood that every Individual among them is ſo diſpoſed; but that there is ſomething in their *Principles* which encourages it, and as Opportunity offers they have been generally ſpeaking too ready to practiſe it. Whether the *Predeſtinarians* have given Occaſion for inſtituting a Compariſon with them, will beſt appear from the following * Hiſtorical Relation of what paſſed in the united Provinces, on account of the Doctrine of Predeſtination and thoſe relating to it.

55. In the Beginning of the Reformation, the Diſputes about theſe Points were in that Country incon-

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* *For a fuller Account of the Facts here recorded ſee* Gerrard Brandt's *Hiſtory of the Reformation, &c. in the* Low Countries: *Alſo the Acts and Decrees of the Synod of* Dort.

And for the Principle held by the Predeſtinarians *which diſpoſed them to bear hard on their Opponents, ſee the following* 70, 71, 72, *and* 77 *Sections*, &c. *An immoral turn of Mind will diſpoſe Men of any Profeſſion to perſecute; but a fiery Zeal will more eaſily prompt Men whoſe Principles ſeem to encourage them.*

The Scotch-Covenant *levels ſeverely againſt Arminians, as well as others, but being framed at a Time, when the People were greatly provoked on another Account, it ſeems not ſo reaſonable to inſiſt on that, as a Proof of the* Predeſtinarian *Spirit; but rather on that Bitterneſs of Spirit which actually prevails, to this Day among many of that Perſuaſion, in* Scotland, *and who make no Scruple to repreſent* Arminiaſm *to be a damnable Doctrine.*

inconſiderable. The *Proteſtants* were contented with oppoſing the groſſer Errors and Superſtitions of *Popery*, and had no Variance among themſelves in Points, which did not interfere with them; but the Diſciples of the *Genevian* Doctors, of the *Palatinate* and of *Naſſau*, who were all in the *Predeſtinarian* Scheme, flocking in among them, and growing more numerous in their Churches, endeavoured to introduce their Notions, and preſcribe them to others, as a Rule of Faith.

56. The *Belgick* Confeſſion of Faith and *Heidelberg* Catechiſm were then greatly in Vogue, as perfect Models of ſound Doctrine; and the Synods endeavoured, by *Eccleſiaſtical* Proceſſes, to compel the Miniſters that diſſented from them, to retract their Notions and ſign theſe Formularies, or reſign their Cures. But the Magiſtrates oppoſed their Proceedings, and would not ſuffer the *Genevian* Diſcipline to take place in their Juriſdiction.

57. About the Time that *Arminius* was called to be a Paſtor to the Church in *Amſterdam*, a Conteſt aroſe between one *Coornhert* and others about *Predeſtination*, and *Arminius* was requeſted by the *Preſbytery* to anſwer his Book. In his attempting it, ſo many Difficulties aroſe, he was forced for a Time to lay aſide his Purpoſe, and ſet himſelf ſeriouſly to inquire into the Principles themſelves. And afterwards, in the Courſe of his Miniſtry, diſcovered ſuch Sentiments as agreed with *Coornhert*'s, and ſome thought bordered on * *Pelagianiſm*,—— a Doctrine which it is ſaid maintains, " that Man " has Power to convert and ſave himſelf, without " the Aſſiſtance of God's Grace.

58. What-

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* *The* Semi-Pelagians *allowed God's Preſcience of all future Events, and of a Grace ſubject to the Freedom of the Will; only deny'd preventing Grace before Converſion.*

58. Whatever Occasion *Arminius* might have given for such Surmises, on his first Inquiries into the Controversy, in the Conclusion he held, "that "God being a righteous Judge, and at the same "time a merciful Father, had from all Eternity "made this Distinction between the fallen Off-spring "of Man, that those who should forsake their "Sins, and put their Trust in *Christ*, should be ab-"solved from their evil Actions, and enjoy everlast-"ing Life; but that the Obdurate and Impeni-"tent should be punished. Besides, that it was "pleasing to God, that all Men should forsake "their Sins, and having attained to the Know-"ledge of the Truth, continue stedfast in it, "but that he compelled no Man." —— * From *Arminius*, those who opposed absolute *Predestination*, were called *Arminians*.

59. *Arminius* on Account of his Notions met with no small Opposition in his Ministry, and especially after he had been settled a a Professor of Divinity in the Academy of *Leiden*, from his Colleague *Gomarus* and others, who held "That it was "appointed by the eternal Decree of God, who "among Men should be saved, and who should be "damned, from whence resulted that some Men "were drawn to Righteousness, and preserved "from falling; but that God suffered all the rest "to remain in the common Corruption of human "Nature, and in their own Iniquities."

60. The Clergy, who had determined to hold a National Synod every three Years, and had been restrained for a long Time by the States, on this Occasion sollicited that such an Assembly should be convened; and the States consented, on Condition, the Confession and Catechism should be there *revised*.

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* *For a like Reason, the Predestinarians who follow that great Reformer, Mr.* John Calvin, *are called* Calvinists.

vised. This Condition greatly displeased the Clergy, and they therefore postponed the Business for a Time.

61. But growing very uneasy, they directed the Professors and Ministers to *inspect* into the Confession and Catechism, and propose their Objections to the Deputies of the particular Synods, and their respective Presbyteries; with a View to discover the Persons, who excepted against them, and afterwards, by an Appeal to the *National* Synod, to have these Persons cited to appear, in order to receive the Ecclesiastical Censure, without allowing their Differences to be considered, or Notions inquired into.

62. And so warm was the Application made by the Deputies of the Synods of *North* and *South Holland* to the States, that they obtained Leave to hold a Convention preparatory to the National Synod.

63. In this Convention there arose three Points about which they had much Debate, *viz.* First, Whether the Deputies from the Churches alone, or in Conjunction with their Constituents should determine the controverted Points? Secondly, Whether the holy Scriptures together with the Confession of Faith should be their Rule of Judging, or the Scriptures alone? Thirdly, Whether the Confession of Faith and Catechism should not be revised, or should be revised? The *Predestinarians* held the former, and *Arminius* with his Followers were for the latter, partly from the Reason of Things, and partly to guard against the convoking a Synod, which they suspected would not allow a free Debate on the controverted Points; but would after convicting them of holding Doctrines contrary to the mentioned Formularies, proceed to pass their Censures against them.

64. As to the *Rule* of Judging, or deciding religious Controversies, one would think there could be

be no Difference among *Proteſtants* about it: but they all would readily allow, that thoſe Perſons, who join *Creeds* and *Confeſſions*, or *Catechiſms*, with the ſure Word of God, as a *Joint Rule* of Faith and Practice, do in Effect admit that ſomething of human Invention may be a *Rule* alſo to bind Men's Conſciences, eſpecially when they are unwilling to have theſe Formularies examined by that ſacred Word; and the natural Conſequence will be, that the *Papiſts* are very juſtifiable in propoſing the Traditions, Formulas and Preſcriptions of their Church, as aRule to Mankind, beſides the holy Scriptures, or as *Proteſtants* alledge, in expreſs Oppoſition to them.

65. The Point alſo reſpecting the *Judge* of Controverſies ſeems no leſs plain. The Civil Power is generally allowed to have no Right to bind the Conſciences of Men; and any Number of the Clergy concerned together can't poſſibly have that Right. They generally meet to decide Points before debated upon among themſelves, and as Parties can't be fit Judges. The Party alſo which is moſt diligent to convene its Advocates, or is moſt numerous, muſt certainly carry its Ends: and the oppoſite will be ready to complain of not being fairly treated. They may ſay, they were out numbered and over-powered, but not convinced; for it is not pretended that the Majority is always in the Right, ſince Hiſtory furniſhes us with numerous Inſtances of general Councils voting for the oppoſite Sides of a Queſtion; and laſtly, if the Word of God be allowed to be the only *Rule* of our Faith and Practice, and Synods or Councils may err; it remains that each Church and Perſon *judge* for themſelves, according as their Conſciences ſhall be enlightened from God's Word.

66. The Perſons, who oppoſed the Doctrine of *abſolute Predeſtination*, were apprehenſive, and, as it appeared afterwards, with great Reaſon, of being overpower'd in a Synod to be convened in the

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Low-Countries, and treated in a Manner anſwerable to the Spirit ſhewn in ſolliciting and preparing for it; and therefore they choſe to caſt themſelves on the States, who were not only well diſpoſed, but endeavoured to protect them, by recommending to the contending Parties to avoid Extremes, to ſuppreſs Controverſies, to unite together, and mutually *tolerate* each other, in reſpect to the five famous Points of Debate.

67. It muſt be remarked, that in this Situation of Affairs, in which the Opponents of *abſolute Predeſtination* had, by the Favour of the States, the manifeſt Advantage; they never attempted to deprive the *Predeſtinarians* of the Liberty of their Conſciences, and of attending the Miniſters of their own Perſuaſion, except the Steps taken by the States in putting a Stop to two or three ſeparate Meetings of the *Predeſtinarians*, to prevent a Schiſm in the Church be eſteemed an Infringement on their Liberty, tho' they had even then the Opportunity of attending their own Miniſters in the publick Churches, and the famous *Hugo-Grotius* recommended to the States the indulging them in the Liberty they took in ſo doing.

68. But the Meaſures taken by the States to obſtruct the Meeting of the *Predeſtinarians* in a National Synod, (for they were not reſtrained from meeting in the *Provincial*) except under ſuch Reſtrictions as might ſerve to procure Peace to all the Churches, and a mutual Toleration of religious Sentiments, reſpecting the controverted Points, proved ſo offenſive to the *Predeſtinarians*, that they did not ſpare to ſpeak both againſt their Opponents and the States, in the ſtrongeſt Manner. The Characters of ſome great Men among the former, as *Epiſcopius*, *Vitenbogart*, *Grevinkhovius*, *&c.* they endeavoured to traduce and blacken, and in the Queſtions, which they moved about the Authority of the latter, they ſhewed very plainly it was their Senſe, that the States infringed on their Rights,

Rights, and *that they had in themselves a Power to make Ecclesiastical Laws and Censures, which the States were bound to enforce.* This Power they esteemed *the Power of the Keys*, delegated by *Christ* to his Church.

69. In Consequence of this *imaginary* Power, which they assumed to themselves, they had formerly, while the States were engaged in the necessary Defence of their Country, made a Law to banish some *Baptists*, that from a Scruple of Conscience had refused to take an Oath; and had designed the like Measures, at another Time, against *Jews*, *Papists* and *Lutherans*, *&c.* which tyrannical Proceedings had so disgusted the States, that they were very near resolving to dissolve all their Consistories. And on the present Occasion, they took the Liberty to convene their Presbyteries and particular Synods, to discuss Points of Controversy, pass Judgment on Professors of Colledges and Ministers, propose the *signing* of Confessions and Catechisms, to several Ministers and Candidates, as *Tests* of their Orthodoxy before their Admission to Office, and even proceeded to remove some from their Places that differed from them.

70. The Opponents of the *Predestinarians*, in order to support their Ministerial Character, Liberty and usefulness, found it necessary to apply repeatedly to the States, with various Complaints and Remonstrances, from the use of which latter Word, they got the Name *Remonstrants*; and there were several solemn Meetings held before the State-Deputies, and States themselves to compose Matters. The *Predestinarians*, however, who had now got the Name of *Contraremonstrants*, for the like Reason, without regarding the Authority and Prohibitions of the State, persisted in their proceedings, and agreed in declaring that all and each of the Five Points were of such a Nature, *as to wound the Honour of God, and disturb and destroy the Peace of Conscience, and that the Maintainers*

tainers of them were not fit to be received into Church Communion.

71. The Reason they assigned for breaking Communion with the Remonstrants was, "that they "had fallen off from the true *Foundation* Princi- "ple of Man's Salvation by the Divine Decree, "and erred *fundamentally*;" tho' besides this, they had a political Reason to prepare more effectually for the designed approaching Synod.

72. In Consequence they drew up an Instrument of Separation, and sent Deputies with credential Letters to get it signed; appointed Money to be collected for the Use of their distressed Churches, as they called them; carried on an actual Separation, and refrained from communicating and preaching in Places, where they might publickly have taught their own Doctrines; applied to their respective States to vote in the general Assembly of the States, for the calling a *National* Synod; and at length finding Prince *Maurice*, the Stadholder, in their Interest, they proceeded every where to seize Churches for their peculiar Use, and exclude the *Remonstrants*, the Prince himself favouring the Separation.

73. As all things now tended to the Separation and Condemnation of the *Remonstrants*; the Prince finding a Dissention and Opposition among the States, took Measures to forward the Business of the *Contraremonstrants*, by disbanding certain Soldiers, called *Warders*, who had been raised by some of the States with a particular View to defend the Civil Power against the Encroachments of the Church; and afterwards he proceeded to change the Magistrates of most of the Cities in *Holland* and *Westfriezland*, by which Means such a Return was made of Members to the States General, as quickly altered the Face of Affairs.

74. A Preparation was now made for the *National* Synod. The Advocate *Oldenbarnevelt*, the the Secretary *Ledenbergh*, and the Heers *Hogerbeets* and

and *Hugo Grotius*, were imprisoned. The famous Ministers *Vitenbogard*, *Grevinkhovius* and others were obliged to abscond. The particular Presbyteries and Synods were so many Inquisitions to find out *Remonstrant* Ministers. In the Presbyteries where the *Remonstrants* were most numerous, the *Contraremonstrants*, that divided from them, were allowed to send an equal Number of Representatives to the *Provincial* Synods; but where fewest the *Contraremonstrants* made no Scruple, on the Occasion to join them again, in order to outvote them, and the *Remonstrants* were obliged to submit. By these Means the *Constraremonstrants* were most numerous in all the *Provincial* Synods, and so could out vote for sending Members to the *National*. Besides several *Remonstrant* Ministers were, on various Pretexts, excluded from the *Provincial* Synods, by which and the like Methods, such Persons were deputed to the *National*, as were generally *Contraremonstrants*. Care was also taken, that the Foreign Ministers, who were invited to the Synod, should be *Predestinarians*.

75. And thus we are come, at length, to the famous Synod of Protestant Divines, that met at *Dort*, the 13th of *Nov.* 1618. armed with the Power of the States, to settle the Affairs of Religion. Before this Assembly, some leading Men among the *Remonstrants* were cited to appear. They appeared, and claimed the Liberty of Sitting as Fellow Members, they expected to be owned as *Brethren*, and not treated as *Criminals*, they pleaded for the Liberty of maintaining their Sentiments openly, and impugning the contrary; but they were not allowed these Claims, and because they insisted on the last, for the Honour of Truth, which they thought was concerned, the Synod excluded them, with such Members of their Synod as were of the same Opinion; yet ordered them not to quit *Dort*.

76. After

76. After ſome Debates among themſelves, the Synod proceeded to ſtate the Doctrines of the *Remonſtrants* from their Books; and at length, to keep up a Colour of Equity, they called upon the *Remonſtrant* Miniſters to ſay what they pleaſed to the ſame Purpoſe. And upon this, *Epiſcopius* with his Brethren, fifteen in all, drew up in a very ſhort Time with incredible Application, their Sentiments on all the Points, with their Reaſons for them, and againſt their Opponents.

77. The Reſult in Relation to the *Remonſtrants* was, *viz.* the Synod laid down their own Poſitions and Notions on the five diſputed Points, and condemned thoſe of the *Remonſtrants*, and then after making the ſeveral Recitals, very religiouſly paſſed their Sentence on them, to the following Purpoſe. * *They declared them erroneous Leaders and Teachers, and their Religion corrupt, that they were guilty of Schiſm and other great offences, were intollerably obſtinate in reſpect both of the Civil Magiſtrate and the Synod, and therefore they diſcharged them from their miniſterial Office and all Collegiate Employments, and referred other Particulars to be ſettled by a leſs general Aſſembly, for the good of the Churches.*

78. After the Foreigners had quit the Synod, the inland Members proceeded to purge the Churches, Colledges and Schools; and made a Proviſion againſt *Remonſtrants* being ever after introduced into thoſe Places, by framing certain formulas to be ſubſcribed by Candidates before their Admiſſion.

79. The States ratified their Proceedings, and offered the cited *Remonſtrants* a Competency to ſupport them, in caſe they would engage to live as private Perſons, and never preach either publickly

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* *See the Sentence of the Synod of* Dort, *on the Remonſtrants.*

lickly or privately, in the Cities, or out of them; and becauſe they rejected the Condition, they were baniſhed their Country.

80. The Depoſing, Silencing, Fining, Impriſoning, and Baniſhing of the *Remonſtrant* Miniſters, were the natural Conſequences of theſe Proceedings, and accordingly took Place. The People who formed ſeparate Aſſemblies, and earneſtly deſired the Aſſiſtance of their Miniſters, were hunted like Patridges on the Mountains, were treated as the Off ſcouring of the Earth, were ſcorned, inſulted, beaten, mob'd, fined and impriſoned, the Army was drawn out againſt them, and fired upon them, even in their Religious Aſſemblies, and the Height of their Devotion. Not the leaſt Quarter was given to their Miniſters or Probationers; for it was the political, tho' Popiſh Maxim of thoſe warm *Calviniſts, that they muſt ſuppreſs the contrary Notions, in order to promote their own*,——as if Truth was unable to ſupport itſelf. Near two hundred *Remonſtrant* Miniſters, and ſuch as favoured them, were excluded the Miniſtry, and about Eighty of theſe were baniſhed.

81. The Warm, the Mournful, the Melting Addreſſes of this People to Prince *Maurice*, the Stadtholder, and the States were to no Purpoſe, tho' they repreſented to them, how they had contributed to the Eſtabliſhment of the States, and common Liberty of Conſcience, at the Expence of their Blood and Treaſure; and that the States themſelves had ſuffered in the ſame Manner, in the *Proteſtant* Cauſe againſt the *Papiſts*, and prayed them not to imitate the Cruelty of the *Papiſts*, and requite their poor Harmleſs, Religious, Dutiful Subjects and Brethren ſo ill, as to *tyrannize* over their Conſciences. Thoſe who had ſufficient Zeal for God and Religion, to ſtand the Fiery Trial, endeavoured to encourage one another, appealing from the Judgement of poor, fallible, partial Men,

Men, to the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, casting their Care upon God, hoping and praying for his Salvation to come out of Zion. *Truth*, said they, *may be pressed, but not oppressed, she is an Heiress of Ages, and the Daughter of Eternity, and like Fire, the more she is born down, the more violently she will break forth again, and the higher she will lift up her Head, not indeed in external worldly Grandeur, but in divine Strength; whenever God, who is visibly incensed against our Sins, and those of the Land, shall be pleased to put an End to our justly deserved correction.*

REFLECTIONS *on what has been said.*

82. WE have seen great Commotions raised among *Protestants*, and upon what *Principles*; 'tis Time we make some cool Reflections upon the Whole, just as one might do after a notable Battle had been fought, or a mighty Burning extinguished.

83. There is an happy Medium, not easy to be attained, between an indolent *Remissness* in Religious Matters, and a *fiery* Zeal; between a *lukewarm* Frame of Mind, and an *overbearing* and *persecuting* Spirit. These Extreams equally proceed from the Spirit of this World, intermixing with the Spirit of Religion, and in various Forms warping the Mind from its due temperature, and the true *Christian* Disposition.

84. *You know not*, says our Blessed Lord to his Disciples, when they were for calling down Fire from Heaven to punish the *Samaritanes*, *what Spirit ye are of:* And the same may be said of all who favour Persecution, they think they promote the Cause of God, but are not aware of the Honour they proudly assume to *themselves*, to be *the sole and infallible Judges of Right and Wrong*, and of that abominable Pride, by which they are prompted

to

to despise their Brethren, tho' it may be greatly distinguished for Learning and Piety.

85. Human Nature is still the same, and as Face answers to Face in a Glass, so the Hearts of Men to each other. What has been above recorded may be a *Land-mark* to steer our Course by———And 'tis not impossible, the Ruler of the World permitted the Event to happen, for that as well as other wise Purposes.———If we suffer, 'tis natural for us to complain they were in the Wrong that persecuted us, and just so we should think, if we attempt to persecute others. We should do as we would be done by. The Tares and the Wheat should be suffered to grow together, till the Angels are Reapers.

86. *Uniformity* in Opinions can scarcely be met with in small Communities, and much less in larger Bodies; and what must be done to obtain it? If Persecution must be used, what Party must be chief. The Majority has been mistaken, as witness *Elijah* among *Baal*'s four hundred Prophets, and the blessed *Jesus* amidst the *Sanhedrim* of the *Jews*. *Christian* Councils have opposed Councils, and the smallest Party at one Time and Place has been most numerous in another. Again we are taught to call no one Father or *Rabbi*, but the *Lord Jesus* only; for whose Sake we should postpone all the civil and natural Relations of Governors, Parents, *&c*. The Genius also of the *Christian* Religion requires the doing all possible good Offices to the Souls and Bodies of Men; it remains then, that *Charity*, a mutual *Forbearance*, and, if possible with a saving to Truth and Sanctity of Manners, *one Brotherhood* or Communion be kept up, as well in a Country, as in each private Community; but as that is scarcely possible among short-sighted Creatures of very jarring Principles and different Degrees of *Christian* Attainments, it seems best for them to combine peace-

ably together, in ſuch ſmall Communities, under the Protection of the Common Parents, or Governors of the Country, as may moſt effectually promote their Advancement in Knowledge and Piety.

87. In reſpect of the Extent of *Chriſtian* Communion, it would ſeem that the Expreſſion of the Apoſtle may be properly applied, *all things are lawful, but all things are not equally expedient and edifying*. Were the Queſtion, for Example, put, May *Predeſtinarians* and their Opponents join in Communion with each other? We ſee how the Anſwer was given by thoſe on one Side the Queſtion, that they could not; becauſe ſuch, as denied that the Converſion and Salvation of Men depended on the divine Decree, erred *fundamentally*. And the other Side ſaw Conſequences, as they thought, in the *Predeſtinarian* Notions, ſubverſive of Piety: And while Matters were thus enflamed, there ſeems no doubt, but a Separation was moſt expedient, tho' Uniformity and a Perſecuting Spirit, for a conſiderable Time, oppoſed it.

88. Moderation ſuggeſts, that *Liberty* of Conſcience ſhould be allowed, and a mutual *Condeſcenſion* uſed on all Sides, conſequently ſuch Forms as tend to bind it, ſhould not be eaſily introduced and impoſed as *Teſts* of Orthodoxy; that good and great Men may differ in ſundry Points; and that thoſe Points will appear greater or leſs, according to the Spirit with which they are inculcated, and the Piety of the Perſons ſupporting them; that in Relation to the preſent Queſtion, both Parties might publickly inſiſt on ſuch Points, as they could agree in; for Example, that Mercy is freely offered to the World in *Jeſus Chriſt*; that God offered his Son to be our Propitiation, and has freely accepted for our ſakes the Sacrifice of his Death, when he might have condemned us for our own

own Sins; that in the publiſhing of the Goſpel, God acts according to the Freedom of his Grace, upon Reaſons to us myſterious, and paſt finding out; that every Man is inexcuſable in the Sight of God; and ſo far free and worthy of Praiſe or Blame, as he does Good or Evil; that every Man ought to employ his Faculties all he can, and pray and depend earneſtly upon God for his Protection and Aſſiſtance; that none in Practice ſhould imagine a Decree hanging over him, and ſo become ſlothful in Duty, but do the beſt he can, as if there were none; that all ſhould be deeply humbled for their Sins, and exactly obedient to the Rules ſet them in the Goſpel, expecting neither Mercy nor Favour either here or hereafter, but according to their own Works.

89. Without a Spirit of Moderation, little Differences will grow into Fudamentals, and with it and a pious Diſpoſition of Mind, the greateſt will ſink into human Infirmities and brotherly Miſtakes; tho' it muſt be owned ſome Principles may appear ſo abſurd, that if frequently inſiſted on, may make a Separation more conducive to Edification.

90. There are who allow *general* Redemption, and yet are fond of the Notion of Man's being born by Nature in a State of *utter Incapacity* to do good, or that he is *ſpiritually* dead, and therefore think an *irreſiſtible* Force is neceſſary to his Converſion, not apprehending that they ſtill implicitly adhere to the Notions of an original Compact, Decree and invincible Grace, which they would ſeem to retract, and ſome of theſe pretend to advance, that all thoſe Perſons, that differ from them in that Point, err *fundamentally*, and have no right to appear *Miniſterially*, and don't *know* how to preach the Goſpel, *&c.* Moderation might ſuggeſt to them, that, if the ſtrange Notion of Man's being born in a damnable Condition ſtands ſo cloſely connected with the Doctrine

of an absolute Decree, as that one serves to introduce the other, as the *latter* lost Ground, the *former* must proportionably abate; that both Parties might agree in representing the great Corruption of the World, occasioned by the Fall of *Adam*, that the *natural* Life, however innocent, and in Infants perfectly consistent with an heavenly State, should however, as they grow up be succeeded by a *Spiritual*, and so *Regeneration*, or the *New-Birth* may be allowed necessary to all even upon that Supposition, but much more on Account of the universal prevailing *Corruption* of Manners, and that all the Endeavours of all God's People, every where are too little to stem the prevailing Current of the Iniquity of the World.

CONCLUSION.

91. IMpiety and Persecution have sufficiently plagued the World, may unfeigned Piety, and universal Charity lift up their Heads, under the benign Influence of the *Toleration* allowed all Christians by our happy Establishment, to restore the Peace and Well-being of Religious and Civil Societies!

92. May the Desires and Endeavours of the contending Parties no longer be, in what Manner they may *Lord* it most over each other; but promote their mutual *Edification* in Love: Striving earnestly, who shall make the greatest Advances in *Truth*, *Righteousness* and *Charity*, and be most *happy* in themselves, and most *useful* in the World!

93. And

93. And may a Watchful, Ever-jealous Eye be eternally kept up by each Party on the Frame of their Spirits; that they may guard againſt the riſing of Pride and every angry Motion, tending to *defame* or any otherways *perſecute* their diſſenting Brethren; that all Endeavours to a Reformation of the World may proceed in the Method of cool, ſolid and perſuaſive Argument, without the leaſt Diſpoſition to *Encroach* upon their Civil or Religious Liberties; till the Time ſhall come, when the great Shepherd of Souls ſhall reduce all his Sheep from all Quarters into one Fold, in the Kingdom of his Glory, where his Saints ſhall live and reign with him to the endleſs Ages of Eternity!

AN

AN APPENDIX

Concerning the

DOCTRINE

OF THE

METHODISTS, &c.

A N

APPENDIX,

CONCERNING

The Doctrine of the *Methodists*, and others, of an *extraordinary and most perceptible Illumination* of the Mind, by God's Spirit, in *Regeneration* and *Saving* Faith.

1. IN the foregoing Tract, under the Head of *Grace*, 'twas owned, that "besides *external* "*Means*, God *inwardly* works by his Spirit on the "Hearts of Men;" and therefore *Regeneration*, or the *New-birth*, may be defined to be that *intire Change, which is made in the Mind of* a sinful *Man by the Operation of God's Grace, in all the usual Means thereof, and particularly by the Influence of his* [a] *Spirit*.

2. It was indeed observed, that in this Procedure God addresses himself to Men, as Creatures endowed

[a] *John* 3. 5.——*Except a Man be born of Water and the Spirit*, &c.

endowed with Sense and Reason, *capable* of [b] attending to the Calls of his Word, Ministers and Providences, as well as Spirit; and to all his pathetick Addresses, Commands, Cautions, Promises, Threatnings, *&c.*

3. And however the *Predestinarians* may represent Men *spiritually dead*, and utterly *passive* in their *Regeneration*, it is evident in Fact, their Addresses to them suppose them *capable* of attending in this Manner; for they call, reason, expostulate, invite, promise, threaten and upbraid, *&c.* as well as their Opponents.

4. It was therefore observed, that it seems to be a Matter of small Importance to Man, to know what *his Power* is, and what the *secret Purposes* or *Methods* of Almighty God towards him are, in respect of what more immediately *concerns him to do*; and that all Parties might agree to represent God to be propitious to Man thro' a Mediator, and urge Sinners to use that Degree of Power they have, whatever it be, and however derived, to the best Purposes, advising them to cast themselves on the Mercy of God, thro' *Jesus Christ*, their Saviour, and assuring them, that God will accomplish his own Work, and give for the Purpose such a Measure of his Grace and Spirit, as he shall see convenient.

5. But a new Difficulty arises in Relation to the *Operation of God's Spirit* on the Heart of Man, to produce in him *Regeneration* and *Faith*; there being [c] several Sorts of Christians lately arisen among us,

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[b] *See* 11*th*, 21*st and* 23*d Sections*, &c. *of the Principles of the* Predestinarians.

[c] 1*st. The* Moravian Brethren, *as will appear by the following Texts in Mr.* John Cennick's *Catechism, Page* 23. *as they are abundantly explained by him in his Sermons*, " *The Spirit witnesses to Men that they* " *are justified, and are the Children of God; and they*

us, who assert the *Testimony* of God's Spirit must be *felt* by converted Persons in a *sensible* and *most convincing*

" *can in Consequence say, they have Peace in God,*
" *and that tho' they were once Blind, and in Darkness,*
" *they now see and are Light in the Lord; their Be-*
" *loved is theirs, and they are his; they have Re-*
" *demption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins;*
" *they live, yet not they, but* Christ *liveth in them,*
" *and the Lives that they live in the Flesh, they live*
" *by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved them*
" *and gave himself for them.*"

Count Zenzendorf *is at the Head of this Sect; and besides many leading Points of Doctrine and Discipline, which they hold in great Disguise, agreeable to those of the Papal Community, as may appear from a close Observation of their Writings, Preaching and Practice; they also hold Man's threefold Death by the Fall, Election, invincible Grace, and final Perseverance, as may appear by the same Catechism. See a little Pamphlet, intitled,* A Serious Address to the Followers of Mr. *Cennick.*

2dly. *The* Methodists, *the Disciples of the Rev.* John *and* Charles Westleys. *These Gentlemen were the Followers of Count* Zenzendorf, *and falling off from him, were excommunicated by him. They reject many of his Doctrines, but retain the Belief of Man's being subject by the Fall, not only to a temporal Death, but likewise the spiritual and eternal; the Doctrine also of an* Illumination *by God's Spirit in Faith, as it is here explained more at large, and that a Man can know the Moment of his Conversion, and in a great Measure their whole Discipline and Method of Worship. They seem to plead for general Redemption; speak frequently of Perfection and full Assurance, and allow a falling away from the Faith,* &c.

3dly. *The Followers of Mr.* Whitfield, *to judge of them*

vincing Manner; which Position I am enabled more particularly to illustrate from the Writings of the *Methodists*.

6. The Doctrine, as I find it laid down in several Parts of the first of three Vol. of Sermons, composed, on several Occasions, by the Rev. *John* and *Charles Westleys*, is this, [d] " Christian Faith is a *sure* " *Confidence*, which a Man hath in God, that thro' " the Merits of Christ *his* Sins are forgiven, *he* is " reconciled to the Favour of God, and saved from " everlasting Damnation. This *Confidence* he ac- " quires by the Spirit of God *witnessing* with his " Spirit, and by an inward *Feeling* thereof; for, " say they, the Testimony of the Spirit is an inward " *Impression* on the Soul, whereby the Spirit of God " directly *witnesses to my Spirit, that I am a Child of* " *God*; and the Manner thereof is such, that a Man " can no more doubt the Reality of it, than he " can doubt of the *shining* of the Sun, while he " stands in the full Blaze of his Beams, or of the " Distinction of Day and Night, *&c.*——'Till a " Man has this Faith [e] he is *not converted*, he is *no* " *Christian*, tho' he should sincerely serve God, in " all the appointed Means of publick and private " Worship, and discharge all the Duties he owes " to his Neighbour, with all his Might—his best " Actions *partake of the Nature of Sin*, he is an *un-* " *justified* Person, and consequently in a damnable " Condition.

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them by some Passages in his Writings. They are mostly Predestinarians *in Principle; but seem to agree with the* Methodists *in their Modes of Worship and Discipline.*

[d] *Page* 6, 30, 32, 44, 50, 59, 77, 94, 110, 138, 143, 148, 155, 193, 196, 201, *&c.* [e] *See the Sermon on the almost Christian, particularly* 26, &c. *also Pages* 30, 31 *and* 32, 40, 44 *and* 45, 49, 93 *to* 97, 181 *and* 182.

" Condition. This Faith [f] that Chriſt died for us
" in particular is the *Gift* of God, and is imparted
" [g] *inſtantly* to all, who deeply abaſe themſelves,
" obey his Calls and diligently ſeek his Face."

7. Before we conſider the Proofs, which are brought for this Doctrine, it will be proper to repreſent the Aſſiſtances, which Chriſtians generally allow we receive from God's Spirit, and in what Manner; that we may the better ſee in what Senſe the Texts of Scripture in Queſtion ſhould be taken: And I apprehend they are theſe. God operates by his Spirit on the Hearts of all Men, to make them holy, and to make them happy—Thoſe who fear God have a larger Share of his Spirit—and among them, thoſe eſpecially, who are in a miniſterial Way—or more generally, the Manifeſtations of God's Spirit bear ſome Proportion to the cloſeneſs of our walking before him in a religious Way, and to publick Uſefulneſs.—And its Operations on the Heart are ſo conformable to thoſe of our own Faculties, that in the general it is not eaſy, if poſſible, to diſtinguiſh them—As therefore a prudent Artiſt does not chooſe to commend his Performances, but leaves them to the Judgment of others; neither ſhould a prudent Chriſtian ſay, *I have the Spirit of God*, but rather leave others to judge of that Point by his Behaviour and Uſefulneſs. Once more in Reference to *Regeneration*, the Words of our Saviour to *Nicodemus*, (*The Wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the Sound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, ſo is every one that is born of the Spirit*) may be underſtood to mean, that as we know the Wind exiſts by its

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[f] *Pages* 97, 47, 100, 122. [g] *Page* 97, 132 *and* 138 *compared with Page* 148, *where it is ſaid*, " *Faith implies Light*," *and Pages* 191 *and* 201 *of the Marks of having it*, &c. *Alſo* 196, 201 *Pages*.

its ſeveral Signs and Effects, tho' we neither ſee it, nor know how it moves; ſo we may aſſure ourſelves of the Exiſtence and Operation of the Spirit, by certain *probable* and *ſatisfying* [h] *Signs*, but eſpecially by the ſufficiently obvious Effects of an intire Change, both in Heart and Life.

8. But a general Perſuaſion of the Aſſiſtance of God's Spirit will not ſatisfy the *Methodiſts*, &c. they are for ſenſible Demonſtration, like that of ſeeing the *Shining* of the Sun in full Blaze. Moſt of the Texts they adduce in Proof of this Poſition ſeem eaſily capable of receiving another more common and obvious Interpretation. Such as 1ſt. "When God promiſed by the Prophets [i] to put "his Spirit within his People, to pour Water on "the Thirſty, and Floods upon the dry Ground. "2*dly*. When *Chriſt* promiſes [k] he will not leave "his People comfortleſs, but will ſend them his "Spirit, and they ſhall know at that Day, *that I* "*am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* "3*dly*. When the *Kingdom* of God is deſcribed as "being of a ſpiritual Nature, [l] *within Men*, and "not conſiſting in Meat and Drink; but *Righte-* "*ouſneſs*, *Peace* and *Joy* in the Holy Ghoſt. 4*thly*, "When

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[h] *As for Example, when ſome Word of God becomes to any Man quick and powerful, ſharper than a two edged Sword, and a Diſcerner of his ſecret Thoughts and Purpoſes; when Miniſters ſpeak home to his particular Caſe; when a Series of Providences ſeem to aim at a particular Point, with certain ſtriking Circumſtances, and there is a Movement in the Mind tending to enlighten the Underſtanding, and incline the Will by proper and powerful Motives; and eſpecially when ſeveral, or all of theſe Methods concur*, &c.

[i] *Ezek.* 36. 27. *Iſaiah* 44. 3. [k] *John* 14. 16, &c. [l] *Luke* 17. 21. *Rom.* 14. 17.

" When *Faith* is ſaid to be the [m] *Evidence* [ἔλεγχος]
" or *Conviction* of Things not ſeen. 5*thly*, Thoſe
" Places which repreſent it to be the Office of
" the Holy Ghoſt [n] to *reprove* or *convince* the World
" of Sin, and of Righteouſneſs and of Judgment;
" to bear *Witneſs* with our Spirit, that we are the
" Children of God—That this *Witneſs* of God is
" greater than that of Men, and he that believeth
" on the Son of God *hath the Witneſs in himſelf*;
" even the good Spirit, which will *eſtabliſh*, *anoint*,
" *ſeal*, and be an *Earneſt* in his Heart; and in
" Conſequence [o] if a Man *have not* the Spirit of
" Chriſt or God, he can't ſay *Jeſus is Lord*, he is
" a *Reprobate* and none of his, and if *he has*, *he*
" *is his*—He has *Redemption* thro' his Blood,
" the *Forgiveneſs* of Sins, and *Peace* in God;
" Chriſt alſo will *dwell* with him, as in a Temple.
" Moreover if the Queſtion be put [p] *haſt thou re-*
" *ceived the Holy Ghoſt?* He can anſwer poſitively
" he has, and not, that he does not know whether
" there be any Holy Ghoſt; for he has received
" the *Spirit of Adoption*, whereby he can cry, *Abba*,
" *Father*; and *feels* the Love of God ſhed abroad
" in his Heart, and can ſay the Life, which I now
" live, *I live by Faith in the Son of God*, who loved
" *me* and gave himſelf for *me*, &c."

c. For the extraordinary Effuſions of the Holy Ghoſt, in the Apoſtles Days, ſerve abundantly to illuſtrate the Prophecies relating to the Spirit of God being

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[m] *Heb.* 11. 1. [n] *John* 16. 8. *Rom.* 8. 16. 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. 2 *Cor.* 1. 21, 22. *Eph.* 1. 13, 14. 1 *John* 5. 9, 10. [o] *Rom.* 8. 9. 1 *Cor.* 12. 3. 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Eph.* 1. 7. *and* 4. 30. *Rom.* 14. 17. *Gal.* 5. 22. *James* 3. 18, &c. *John* 14. 23. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *Eph.* 3. 17. 1 *John* 3. 24. *and* 4. 12, 13. 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. 2 *Tim*, 1. 14. [p] *Acts* 19. 2. *Rom.* 8. 15. *and* 5. 5. *Gal.* 2. 20.

being poured forth on his People like Floods of Water, and were and are also a powerful Proof of Christianity, and in consequence of the *close Union* of Christ with his People and Father, not only to the primitive, but to all Christians in all Ages. And as for the *Spirituality* of Christ's Kingdom, and the Qualities of *Righteousness*, *Peace* and *Joy*, they are equally suited to the common Notions of the Assistance of God's Spirit; and therefore the three first of the foregoing Heads don't seem to require any more particular Answer. The *Evidence*, or *Conviction* of *Faith*, mentioned in the Fourth Head, may mean no more than that a good Man, determining on the Side of Religion and Virtue, upon the *Evidence* God is pleased to afford in Points, which are disputed by the World, gets a Persuasion, or *Faith*, which from its producing Cause, is called *Evidence* or *Conviction*, and according to its Degree, gives a Reality or *Subsistence* to spiritual Persons, and unseen good Things. And this may be easily conceived without any extraordinary, or special Illumination.

10. In the Fifth Head, none will dispute that it is the Office of God's Spirit to *reprove*, or *convince*, the World of Sin, *&c* and that it may do this by various Ways, besides the common, which we cannot be aware of. And as for the *Witness* God may be pleased to bear by his Spirit to his People, at any Time, that they are *his*; let it be remarked, that in the Apostolick Age, the extraordinary Gifts of God's Spirit seemed to have been designed as a *Proof of Christianity* in general, rather than an Evidence to any particular Person of *his* being a Christian; because the Apostle *Paul* supposes a Person to have these Gifts, and [q] wanting Charity, to be nothing: And this Observation must have

[q] 1 *Cor.* 13. 1, &c.

have ſerved as a Caution to thoſe primitive Chrſtians not to preſume on any Meaſure of Grace obtained, as ſufficient, and ſo grow remiſs in Duty; but rather cautiouſly to preſs forward to greater Attainments. However it muſt be owned, that an *extraordinary Meaſure* of Grace is a Mark of *extraordinary Favour*, and a ſtrong Proof that Perſons ſo highly favoured are the Children of God. Yet a Chriſtian might more readily ſay, *we are* the Children of God, than *I am* his Child.

11. It may likewiſe be remarked, that the Goſpel Diſpenſation being introduced by the Spirit of God, in an extraordinary manner to eſtabliſh a *ſpiritual* Kingdom or Government, and to produce remarkable Changes on the *Spirits* of Men, in contradiſtinction to *carnal* Authority; *outward* Ceremonies, and a Behaviour ſuited to the *Deſires of the Fleſh*; wherefoever this Diſpenſation took Place, and Converts were made, they might be ſaid to be *admitted* into this ſpiritual Kingdom, and *intitled* to its Privileges, and in conſequence each Perſon might, in many Reſpects, ſay he had what the whole had. But the Spirit of God teſtified, *that Jeſus Chriſt was our Lord*, and therefore none can call him Lord but *by* (*i. e.* in conſequence of, or agreeable to, or as aſſiſted by, the Teſtimony of) *that Spirit*. The *Teſtimony* alſo which God bore to the primitive Chriſtians he bears to all, and to us, who profeſs ourſelves Chriſtians even now, *that as ſuch*, we are his Sons. Add, if Chriſtianity requires a certain *Diſpoſition of Spirit*, whoſoever has that Diſpoſition, or walks according to it, may be ſaid to have the *Chriſtian Spirit*, and *walk in the Spirit*, and find himſelf *eſtabliſhed* in ſo doing, and to *belong* to God and Chriſt, to be of the Number of the *Redeemed*, and to have the *Forgiveneſs* of Sins, to have the *Seal* or Sign of the Spirit, in the Graces thereof, and to be an *adopted Son* of God, and from a Senſe of theſe great Benefits may *feel a ſecret*

Peace

Peace and Joy within, and that his Soul is ſenſibly affected with the Love of God, and can even cry, *Abba, Father*, and ſay, *the Life which I now live* (as a Chriſtian) *I live by Faith in the Son of God*, &c. And on the contrary, he that has not this *Chriſtian Spirit*, is no Chriſtian, but a Reprobate.

12. However, many Paſſages muſt be owned to have a peculiar Propriety and Emphaſis in reſpect to the Apoſtolick Age; particularly, when the Apoſtle *Paul* ſays, " we have received the Spirit " of God, that we might know [*i. e. thoroughly*] " the Things [*or Doctrines*] that are freely given " us of God [*for the Good of Man*] that God hath " anointed us, ſealed [*or ſigned*] us [*for his Servants*,] " by [*an extraordinary Meaſure of*] his Spirit, and " given us, [*as the firſt Profeſſors of the Goſpel of his* " *Son*] the Earneſt of his Spirit in our Hearts,—— " which is alſo the Earneſt of our Inheritance [*as* " *Chriſtians at large*] until the Redemption of the " purchaſed [*heavenly*] Poſſeſſion: And he that " believeth on the Son hath the Witneſs in *himſelf*, " [i. e. *by ſome ſpecial Gift, at leaſt by the gracious* " *Change wrought in him under this ſpiritual Diſ-* " *penſation*] of God's having honoured his Son to " be the Source of Life to him, as well as to all, " who believe in and obey him. And the *Witneſs*, " which God thus gives to prove *Chriſtianity*, and " in conſequence our *Adoption*, as Chriſtians, is " greater than the Witneſs of Men: Even as the " Witneſs, which God bore to the Miniſtry of his " Son, by the Miracles he wrought, exceeded the " Teſtimony of *John*, tho' a Man filled with the " Holy Ghoſt, and deputed to be the Forerunner " and a Witneſs to the Meſſiah."

13. But ſuppoſe Chriſtians may in all Ages appeal to what they *feel*, or experience, as a kind of internal Proof or Evidence, not only of the *Truth of Chriſtianity*, from its Conformity to the Conſtitution of their Natures, and tending to make them

them happy; but of their *Adoption*, from ſome ſecret Intercourſe which they have with the Deity, communicating a certain Compoſure of Mind, univerſal Benevolence, an Attentiveneſs in religious Duties, a tranquil Joy in Devotion, and a ſympathetick Whiſper, *that all is well*——which may be eſteemed * Chriſt's *Dwelling*, by his Spirit, within us, as in an holy Temple; does it therefore follow, this Manifeſtation muſt be as ſenſible as that of the *Sun's ſhining*, in full Blaze, and eſpecially that *as ſuch* it may take place in *Regeneration* and *Faith*, ſo far as to be the *eſſential* Part thereof.

14. If the Language of the Spirit had been ſo explicit even to the firſt Chriſtians to ſignify their being the *Children of God*, what Occaſion had the Apoſtle *John*, in his Epiſtle, to give them many other Signs, in this particular Strain, that *hereby ye may know ye are the Children of God, viz.* If ye abſtain from all Evil—and practiſe whatſoever is good—from a real Principle of Love to God and Man——evidenced by the Fruits of Love—with a Conſciouſneſs of Sincerity and Self-approbation—as alſo of their having overcome the World——and that they receive the Anſwer of their Prayers; all theſe Signs, I ſay, as well as the *Witneſs* of the Spirit. But, as was obſerved, the Gifts of the Spirit were rather a direct Proof of *Chriſtianity* in general, than of a *perſonal Regeneration*, tho' to be ſure it was indirectly a Proof of the latter.

15. 'Tis written, [r] *the Juſt ſhall live by Faith*, and *Faith* is deſcribed, as partaking of the Nature of

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* *It ſuffices to make out* Chriſt's *in-dwelling in us, that we have Faith in him and love one another, according to* Eph. 3. 17. *and* 1 John 4. 13; *tho' the Witneſs of the Spirit of God is alſo mentioned.*

[r] *Heb.* 2. 4. *and* 10. 38, &c.

of *Hope*; for Example, I *believe* God thro' Jesus Christ will pardon a repenting Criminal, I *hope* he will me; I *believe* God will reward the Righteous in Heaven, I *hope* he will me; and from this strict Relation between *Faith* and *Hope*, the Apostle *Paul* says [s] *we are saved by Hope*: but it is remarkable he immediately subjoins, *Hope that is seen, is not Hope: for what a Man seeth, why doth he yet hope for.* And by a Parity of Reason, *Faith that is seen is no longer Faith.* How does this Account agree with the *Methodists* Description of Faith, as including a strong sensible Demonstration, exceeding that of the Sun's shining, *&c*? [t] —Here we see thro' a Glass darkly, but hereafter Face to Face; and of the three Graces, *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Charity*, 'tis only *Charity* shall abide; for *Faith* must give Place to Sight, and *Hope* to Enjoyment.

16. And if what is said of Faith holds true from the Nature of the thing, even thro' the whole Life of a Christian, and when his Graces are most improved; how much more at *the Time of Regeneration*, when the Mind is more confused and darkened, and a spiritual Sensibility just beginning to exist, and the divine Light of Life to kindle up? At such a Time should it be asked, can'st thou experimentally say, *thou hast received the Holy Ghost?* This Question the *Methodists* put, [u] and expect the young Proselyte should answer in the Affirmative; but unluckily for them, [w] the Apostle puts the Question thus, Have ye received the Holy Ghost *since ye believed?* According to the *Methodists* Principle, the Answer shonld be Yes; because we have believed, and, they say, [x] "Faith implies "Light, even the Light of God shining upon the "Soul:" Yet the Answer the Christians gave the Apostle

[s] *Rom.* 8. 24. [t] 1 *Cor.* 13. 12 & 13. [u] Page 45. [w] *Acts* 19. 2. [x] Page 148.

Apoſtle was, " that they had not ſo much as heard, " whether there were any Holy Ghoſt." Tis to be hoped their being baptized by *John* did not obſtruct the divine Light.

17. And here it ſeems natural to inquire how the *Methodiſts* would treat Multitudes, who can't have their Faith? For if thoſe baptized by *John* had not *the Faith of Illumination*, none under the Old Teſtament Diſpenſation, or before, could have it, as well for that Reaſon, as for a more general one, that they had not a clear Notion of Chriſt's Death and Merits *applied to them*, in the Knowledge of which a great deal of the Nature [y] of Faith conſiſts; neither has the Generality of Mankind, ſince the Publication of the Goſpel; for in our Days, tho' Chriſtianity be greatly ſpread, not perhaps a ſixth Part is nominally Chriſtian, and of theſe a very inconſiderable Number are *Methodiſts*, or admit of a Faith in their Senſe of the Word; beſides all who die in Infancy?——One would think an Inquiry ſhould be made into the State of Mankind at [z] large, and the Proviſion God has made for the *World*, before Men grow too dogmatical about particular favourite Schemes and Notions.

18. And what Occaſion is there for ſuch an *Illumination* from God in Regeneration and Faith? 'Tis generally allowed God does not make Uſe of extraordinary Means, when the ordinary will do. What then does this Illumination for us, which could not be done as well without it? It wipes out, it ſeems, the Score of our paſt Sins, and ſatisfies the Soul of its being in an happy Condition.

19. But why ſhould Illumination be neceſſary to our Juſtification? " Juſtification, ſays Mr. *Weſtley*, " is ([aa]) that Act of God, the Father, whereby " for

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[y] Page 6. [z] *See* Jonah 4. 10, 11. [aa] Pages 89 *and* 94, *&c.*

" for the Sake of the Propitiation made by the " Blood of his Son, he *sheweth forth his Righteouf-* " *nefs* (or Mercy) *by the Remiffion of the Sins that* " *are paft*; and the *Condition* thereof is Faith."—— But one would be apt to think Faith is a *Condition* only in *capable* Subjects (confequently not Infants), and *as far as capable* (confequently the Faith of Chriftians will not be expected in Infidels, who have no Opportunity of hearing the Gofpel preached); becaufe God is juft and merciful, and will not expect Impoffibilities of his Creatures: Therefore one wou'd think, from the very Nature of Things, that Faith, confidered as the *Condition* of Juftification, fhould be underftood (exclufive of Illumination, were it at all neceffary, and) in fo *general* a Senfe as to take in even Heathens, and that it would be much more reafonable to advance this, than *uncharitably* to affert God will deftroy them all, becaufe they don't go as far as we may, efpecially as it muft be owned many of them heartily endeavour to do it.

20. But fuppofe juftifying Faith fhould have Chrift for it's expref Object, why fhould I believe more or lefs of the Matter, than it really is, *i. e.* Chrift died to fave the ungodly in general, and confequently *me* in particular. Sure I want no further Revelation than that of the Gofpel, to fatisfy me in this Point. One would think the Promife of God himfelf, in the New Teftament, fhould fupercede the Neceffity of a particular Revelation in this Inftance.

21. If it be faid, that this Revelation is neceffary to give what Chrift has done an *Efficacy* to my Soul ——Does not this imply, either fome *Imperfection* in Chrift's Merits, which can't avail to fave me, unlefs God reveals to me he will confider them in that Light, in Cafe I do; or *Severity* in the Father of Mercies, who on Account of my Slownefs in apprehending the Neceffity of fuch a Revelation and

and ſeeking it, however dutiful I may be otherways, in Intention and Obedience, will not accept me, nor my Services; or a certain *Election* of Perſons, with a Limitation to the Deity to ſignify *it*, by a *ſpecial Illumination*, before Death; or Laſtly, *Caprice*, in laying more Streſs on a meer Notion, than on real Worth and rational Piety? In a Word, is it not much more worthy of God to ſay, if we *are not wanting* on our Part, he *never will* on his: If we *ſincerely* fear him and work Righteouſneſs, wherefoever we are, we ſhall be accepted; yea that a conſcientious careful Chriſtian, tho' full of Fears and Doubts, is much to be preferred to the careleſs preſumptuous one, who ſays Lord, Lord open to me, *&c?*

22. *Laſtly*, of what Nature is this much talked of Revelation from God in Regeneration and Faith? If it be as demonſtrable as the *Sun ſhining*, it muſt be ſomeway equivalent to a Voice from the moſt excellent Majeſty, *thou art my Son*. Is ſuch a full Revelation neceſſary in our preſent obſcure State, where we are to ſee but *thro' a Glaſs darkly*; in this *State of Trial*, where we are to paſs thro' various Degrees of Improvements, with Glimpſes only of his Preſence, 'till we get at the Height of Chriſtian Attainments; while we are but *buckling* on our Armour for the Fight, and *girding* up our Loins for the Race, and before we have conquered our Foe, and won the Goal? Can't we ſatisfy ourſelves at preſent with the ordinary general Aſſurances of God's Word? If we are perſuaded he ſpeaks there, what Occaſion of a voice from Heaven? We have *Moſes* and the Prophets; why ſhould we ſeek more? Yes, we muſt have it ſeems an expreſs Revelation from God. Be it ſo, if ſo the Fact is. Men and Brethren, let us know your Experiences.

23. If any Man can inform us, ſurely Mr. *Weſtley* can, let us therefore attend to what he ſays,

" As

bb "As to the *Manner* how the divine Teſtimony "is manifeſted to the Heart, I do not take upon "me to explain. *Such Knowledge is too wonderful* "*and excellent for me; I cannot attain unto it. The* "*Wind bloweth, and I hear the Sound thereof,* but "I cannot tell *how it cometh or whither it goeth.* "As no one knoweth the Things of a Man, ſave "the Spirit of a Man that is in him; ſo the *Man-* "*ner* of the Things of God knoweth no one, ſave "the Spirit of God."

24. Who would expect ſuch an obſcure Account of a Matter, which was to equal the Evidence of my *ſeeing the Sun to ſhine.* Here is no Voice pretended, like that the Apoſtle *Paul* heard from Heaven, from whence to collect God ſpoke; for we will eaſily allow, that if God pleaſe, he can evince to his Creatures; 'tis he who ſpeaks: And if there be no Voice, the Taſk is increaſed on the Candidate, for he muſt ſatisfy himſelf from the ſeveral Impreſſions on his Mind, both *that God made them,* and that they amount to an expreſs Declaration, *that he is a Child of God.*

25. But the Difficulty increaſes ſtill upon us; for the Manifeſtation is ſo obſcure, that it requires certain Marks to enable us "*clearly* and *ſolidly* to "diſtinguiſh it (theſe are cc Mr. *Weſtley*'s Words) "from the *Preſumption* of a natural Mind, and "from the *Deluſion* of the Devil; and this Affair, "he ſays, is of the higheſt Conſequence;" and then he proceeds to give Scripture Marks of Converſion, and not Marks reſpecting illuminative Viſion——*To the Law and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no Light in them,* (Iſaiah 8. 20).

26. Moreover, ſays he, it requires dd that "I have

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bb *Page* 195. cc *Page* 196. dd *Pages* 202 *and* 203.

" have *spiritual* Senses for the Purpose, my *natural*
" not being sufficient; also that I know that those
" Senses are *rightly disposed*, and this is also a Case
" of vast Importance; for if a Man mistake in this
" he may run on in an endless Error and Delusion.
——Very extraordinary this. To perceive natural Objects a Man must have a natural Eye, and to be rap'd up into the 3d Heavens, one may well suppose a Person should have new Senses to perceive what might be seen or heard there; but that it requires a new Sense to understand this plain Proposition, *thou art my Son*, I own, I cant possibly comprehend; or why the Wisdom of God, intending to pronounce this simple Sentence, should make use of a round about Method to do it, when in the usual Operations of his Spirit and Providence, he takes *the most direct and simple Methods*; why also he should use so obscure a Manner, that a Man must not only have a *new Sense* himself to perceive it, but must carefully examine whether that Sense be *rightly disposed* to receive the Impressions; why he does not manifest this plain Truth alike to all, or put it in the Power of the Ministers of the Gospel to distinguish when it is genuine, or at least to assure every Candidate that it is so, *without any Possibility of mistaking a Delusion for it.*

27. But does not all this Obscurity in Illumination plainly suggest, that those Christians, who pretend to no more than general and common Influences, have a Right to assert a particular Revelation from God, as much as the *Methodists*, tho' they are more prudent and modest than to assume to speak of it in the same strong Terms.

28. And if this be the Case, how charitable is it in the *Methodists* to censure their fellow Christians, who are perhaps on *equal* Terms with themselves in Point of Illumination by the good Spirit of God, but don't use their Language, and even

think it absurd to do so; as [ee] *no Christians*, having the Form indeed but wanting the Power of Religion; and in Consequence [ff] no *Gospel Ministers*; for they can't be presumed to be such, who are absolutely unacquainted with the Gospel; as [gg] *self-righteous* Persons; as [hh] *mocking* God, in praying for *the Inspiration of his holy Spirit*, and not allowing their Notion of it; as [ii] *baptized Heathens*; as [kk] having *the Spirit of Antichrist* in opposing their Notion of it; as [ll] establishing a *devilish* Distinction to destroy it; and [mm] in Danger of sinking into the bottomless Pit of Hell, only by *wavering* or *doubting* of it.

29. There are [nn] many Texts of Scripture explained by the *Methodists* in the Light of their particular Doctrine, which can't reasonably be produced as Proofs of it, and therefore need only be mentioned; such as when they represent, " that " all Men, and even *serious professing* Christians, " till they have got the divine Light of God's Spi- " rit, in their Sense, are *dead* in Trespasses and " Sins; that Christ comes to *call* and to *save* such, " but not while they continues *self-righteous* [*i. e.* " averse to their Faith]; that they should be *poor* " in Spirit in Remembrance of their original and " actual Pollution, working out their Salvation " with *Fear* and *Trembling*, and striving [or *ago-* " *nizing* to enter in at the strait Gate; not resting " till

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[ee] *See 6th Section of this Appendix and 5th Note.* [ff] *This they frequently assert, tho' with Caution; not even to some Proselytes 'till they have them secure. See Pages 72 and 73, &c.* [gg] *Page 39, compared with the almost Christians in the 2d Sermon.* [hh] *Page 44.* [ii] *Pages 178 and 179.* [kk] *Page 49 and 50.* [ll] *Page 50.* [mm] *Pages 95 and 96.* [nn] *Pages 133 and 198, 138, 46, 45, 32, 110, 47, 77, 49, 176, 155 and 176, 211, 139, &c.*

" till God proclaim his Name to them, *the Lord*, " *the Lord God merciful and gracious*, &c. that Christ " has the *Power* to save, and the Word of his Sal- " vation is *near*, even in their Mouths, *&c.* and in " case they will attend to it, God, who command- " ed the Light to shine out of Darkness, will " *shine* in their Hearts, and *enlighten* their Dark- " ness; the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with " *healing* in his Wings, and their Light shall *break* " *forth* as the Morning; and in that Day it shall " be said unto each of them, *arise, shine*; for thy " Light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is " *risen* upon thee; Christ will say to each, Son, " *be of good Chear, thy Sins are forgiven thee*; then, " O Soul, thy *Heavineſs* and *Sorrow* shall be turned " into Joy; thou shalt taste the Lord is gracious; " that God has *revealed* his Son to thee; that thou " art *saved* by Grace, which is the Gift of God to " *thee*; and now thou may'st say, *I know my Re-* " *deemer liveth, and I live by Faith in him*; and " beholding with *open* [or uncovered] Face, [the " Veil being now taken away] the *Glory* of the " Lord, his glorious Love, and the glorious Image, " wherein thou wast created, thou art *changed* into " the same Image, from Glory to Glory, by the " Spirit of the Lord, *&c.*

30 It may be asked, if there be not a *beautiful* Turn, and an *elegant* Force in all these and the like Texts, when explained in the Sense of the *Methodists?* But the Answer must be, *there is no Beauty but in Truth*, tho' a human Eye or Mind may be either disorder'd, or too weak to discover the Deformity and Defects of Error; also we should not presume to kindle Sparks of our own, and seek to extinguish the Fire of God's Altar.

31. The Doctrine of Election seems beautiful, while it represents God contriving and decreeing to save Mankind eternally, at the Expence of sending his only begotten Son to purchase their

Redemption, and of rich Supplies of his Grace, not only to enlighten and convert, but to uphold them to the End; for Love and Compaſſion are Attributes worthy of God, and agreeable to poor diſtreſſed Creatures; but change the Scene, and take another View of the ſame Doctrine, and you'll ſee all the Deſcendants of *Adam*, the whole human Race, weltring in Blood, and extended on the burning Lake, even the little harmleſs Infants not excepted, tho' they never ſaid one Word, or did one Action to diſpleaſe their God; the ſovereign Monarch, viewing the Scene around—— culls out a few, and with unrelenting Eyes, paſſes by the reſt. Ah, ſave me, and me, ſay Crouds! I wont ſays the Sovereign. The innocent ones reply we never ſinned to offend your Majeſty. The Sovereign replies your Father did. But, ſay they, are we in a *different* Situation, or in any Reſpect *worſe* than thoſe, whom thou haſt ſaved? No, ſays the Sovereign, but 'tis my Pleaſure. Bowels of Compaſſion, ſays the wretched, hear, O hear and ſave! No— Would not one be apt to think, in this Procedure, God was grown a *Tyrant*, and had forgot his darling Attribute *Mercy*; that he ceaſed to be the *juſt*, the *wiſe* and *Holy One*, in condemning innocent Children for the Guilt of their Parent; *capriciouſly*, or for no Reaſon, chooſing ſome and condemning the reſt; alſo making no Diſtinction between the *Good* and *Evil*. Does not the Picture in this Light look really ugly? So conclude all erroneous Doctrines would do, when the Maſk is taken off, or the deformed Side ſet in View.

32. The *Methodiſts* deſcribe the State of *Adam*'s Poſterity as *deplorable* as the above; but ſay God has provided a Remedy for their Recovery by Faith in Chriſt. If they mean for the Recovery of *all* Mankind, the diſmal Strokes of the Picture are taken away, and as for a little Diſtortion of the

the Features in it, it might be paſſed by, rather than diſpleaſe ſuch peeviſh Creatures, as we are apt to be, when croſſed. But there is a great Limitation — even the lopping off *large* Limbs of the Body of Mankind, or a Change muſt needs be made of the favoured Syſtem; for firſt, *all the infant Race* muſt be excluded as naturally incapable Subjects of Faith, *the infidel World* as morally ſo; *the greateſt Part of the Chriſtian World*, not becauſe they all miſbehave, but many becauſe, tho' they behave well, they have not the Grace or Senſe to comprehend that particular Kind of Faith which, 'tis ſaid, God expects; and God * wont give them Faith unleſs they aſk it, and yet if they dont get it, he'll damn them. Does the Picture pleaſe?

33. If they ſay Infants are ſafe, thro' Chriſt; why not a *Socrates*, a *Zenophon*, a *Plato*, or a *Confucius*, thoſe God-like Heathens? If theſe may be ſaved too, the Picture is refining, and may come to this at laſt, *God is no Reſpecter of Perſons but in every Nation, thoſe who fear him and work Righteouſneſs ſhall be accepted*, i. e. the juſt Man ſhall live, not to ſay by a *Methodiſt*'s Faith, but *any*, provided it be *the beſt he can attain and conforms his Practice to.*

34. But it may be ſaid, that if the *Methodiſts* be deprived of this diſtinguiſhing Notion, they will not be able *to do as much Good as they do*, by *alarming* the Conſciences of Men with ſuch cloſe Queſtions, as they are wont to put; as doſt thou believe Chriſt

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* *This may be collected from Mr.* Weſtley's *Deſcription of the almoſt Chriſtian and his own particular Caſe, (Page 27) compared with the frequent Directions or Exhortations given to Men to humble themſelves before God, and agonize to enter into the ſtrait Gate, with Aſſurances of Acceptance on that Condition*, &c.

Chriſt loved *thee*, and gave himſelf for *thee*? Haſt *thou* Faith in his Blood? Believeſt *thou*, the Lamb of God hath taken away *thy Sins?* and doth his Spirit *bear Witneſs* with *thy Spirit*, that *thou* art a Child of God? *&c.* to all which Queſtions they expect more than barely, *I believe, I hope*, &c. for you muſt be *aſſured* thereof by a *divine Revelation*; and therefore *labour hard*, and even *agonize* to obtain it.

35. I anſwer, ſtill we muſt not quit the Road God has mark'd out for us, or pull down his Poſts to put up our own. We muſt not do Evil that Good may come of it; but be found in the Way of our Duty, and leave the Iſſue to him. Suppoſe there were none, or few Inſtances, of Perſons ſtrongly agitated with convulſive Motions, ſhall the *calmer* Movements of a Soul *thoroughly awakened*, yet *ſtaying* itſelf on the Promiſes of God, be leſs pleaſing to the Almighty, or leſs ſerviceable to the Man, than the *violent* throws of animal Nature, in a Perſon driven to Deſpair and Deſtraction, from a ſtrong Deſire of what *God has no where promis'd to give*, and which therefore to expect muſt be a *preſuming* on his Goodneſs, or, if in ſome ſpecial Caſe he grant it, a ſingular Inſtance of his Favour; and it may be well ſuppoſed, the Reaſon why the Generality of theſe deſpairing Perſons find a *Peace* ſucceeding this animal Storm, is either becauſe ſuch violent Proceedings can't hold long, without overſetting the animal Frame, and ſo Nature ſubſides, when tired out; or that we are *apt to believe that to be, which we deſire ſhould be*; or that the ordinary Promiſes of God are *abundantly ſufficient*, and a ſinking Perſon, who would catch at a Straw, may very reaſonably lay hold of what would have been ſufficiently obvious, were it not for that erroneous Repreſentation of Faith, which occaſioned the Buſtle.

36. We

36. We may ſee from hence, what little Reaſon *Methodiſts* have to boaſt of Inſtances, which to conſidering Perſons muſt really throw a Diſcredit upon their Principles; for they are ſo far from being plain Proofs of the *Divine* Preſence, that they are only ſo many Proofs of their own *miſtaken* Notions. And if theſe Notions are both uncharitable and offenſive to ſober Chriſtians of all Denominations, and ſerve to raiſe ſuch Obſtacles in the Breaſts of Proſelytes, is there not a fairer Proſpect of uſefulneſs in diſcarding them at once.

37. And Men, who have ſet out with ſuch *Zeal* for *Religion*, and no inconſiderable Abilities to promote it, to judge according to Charity and the Face of Things, as muſt really charm religious People; may very reaſonably hope for Succeſs, in the Uſe of the very ſame Methods, which they now purſue, tho' they ſhould drop any, and every erroneous Notion, which they can at any Time diſcover.

38. The holy Scriptures furniſh with Queſtions enough to prove Men's State and Standing in a religious Way, and the *Methodiſts* ſhew, [oo] by their Conduct, they neither want Skill nor Courage to apply them; and they are abundantly ſufficient for *Doctrine*, for *Reproof*, for *Correction* and for *Inſtruction* in Righteouſneſs; that the Man of God may be *perfect* and *thoroughly* furniſhed unto all good Works.

39. I hope, after what has been ſaid, it will not appear abſurd to give the following Caution to the *Methodiſts*, that if their Principle of Illumination in Faith leads them to Eſteem, as *no Chriſtians*, the other Denominations, who worſhip the *ſame*

[oo] *See Pages* 31, 44, 46, 59, 77, 179, *&c. abſtracting however from their favourite Notion of Illumination.*

ſame God, thro' the *ſame* Mediator, and in Hopes of the gracious Aſſiſtances of the *ſame* Spirit; alſo their Miniſters to be *no Goſpel Miniſters*; that they take Care by all Means to guard againſt *ſpiritual* Pride, or a *Phariſaical* Diſpoſition of Heart, and learn not to value themſelves more upon a *meer Notion*, than the *ſolid Attainments* of Religion and Virtue, and the *rational Improvement* of their Faculties.

40. And may it be a Caution alſo to Chriſtians in general, who differ from them, that tho' they muſt, from a Regard to Truth, modeſtly anſwer, we *believe*, we *hope*, to certain Queſtions, where a *Methodiſt* would ſay he *knows*, he *feels* and is *aſſured by God's Spirit*; that they ſuffer not their Paſſions to riſe, and ill-will to lodge in their Breaſts on that Account; becauſe *Love is the Characteriſtick of a Chriſtian*, and aims at promoting univerſal Truths, Love and Righteouſneſs, but rather calmly examine into the Cauſes of the great Progreſs of Religion among that People, and, reſolving thro' the Aſſiſtance of Grace not to reſt in an *indolent Laodicean* Frame of Spirit, proceed with *no leſs Fervor* in their Chriſtian Courſe, and aſpire to all that *Confidence* in God's Favour, and *intercourſe with his Holy Spirit*, which a diligent Walking before him, in the Exerciſe of all the Chriſtian Graces, will prepare them to obtain, and therewith add the *Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit*, which is in the Sight of God of great Price.

F I N I S.